ESSENTIAL TORAH TEMMAH

BAMIDBAR

THE ESSENTIAL

TORAH TEMIMAH

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"It has been our aim to show that this Torah, the Written Law, is a twin sister, as it were, to the Oral Law. They are inseparable — as body and soul, as flame and wick — the one, intimately enmeshed with the other. And so long as the Written Law is not conjoined with the explanations and addenda of the Oral Law, it is not a complete Torah. Its message is not complete and its mitzvah is not complete."

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This scholarly, erudite volume demonstrates Rabbi Silverstein's thorough mastery of his subject and his unique ability to transmit complex material in lucid, readily comprehensible fashion.

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About the Translator

Rabbi Silverstein, an alumnus of the Mesivta Rabbi Chaim Berlin, was Phi Beta Kappa at Brooklyn College, from which he graduated at the head of his class, summa cum laude, with honors in English. In addition to his work as author and as translator of Torah classics (he is nearing completion of the monumental Complete Ein Yaakov) Rabbi Silverstein has taught at leading universities in the United States and in Israel. He has served as Principal of the Rambam Torah Institute in Los Angeles, the Magen David Yeshiva in Brooklyn, the Tonya Soloveitchik-Yeshiva University High School for Girls in Manhattan, and the Torah Academy of Philadelphia. He has taught on all levels, lectured extensively on teaching methodology, and supervised teachers for the Israeli Ministry of Education. He resides with his family in Jerusalem.

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THE ESSENTIAL TORAH TEMINAH

by Harav Boruch Halevi Epstein

Translated and elucidated by SHRAGA SILVERSTEIN

BAMIDBAR



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Bamidbar

1:2 Count all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, according to the house of their fathers, by the number of names, every male by head-count.

by their families, according to the house of their fathers - From here it is derived that the family of the father is called "family"; the family of the mother is not called "family" [This has various halachic implications] (Bava Bathra 109b).

1:51 And when the tabernacle travels, the Levites are to dismantle it. And when the tabernacle rests, the Levites are to raise it. And the stranger that approaches it shall die.

And the stranger that approaches it shall die - A certain idolator asked Hillel: To whom does this verse refer? He answered: Even to David, king of Israel (Shabbath 31a).²

2:17 And the tent of meeting shall travel with the camp of the Levites in the midst of the camps. As they encamp, so shall they travel, every man in his place by their flags.

And the tent of meeting shall travel - It was taught: Lower-order offerings are eaten in the entire camp of Israel [even when they are traveling, the offerings not being invalidated by leaving the fixed camp]. Whence is this derived? From: "And the tent of meeting shall travel" — Though it travels, it is still "the tent of meeting" (Zevachim 116b).^{1,2}

As they encamp, so shall they travel - It was taught: The show-bread, even during the travels, is invalidated by leaving [the tabernacle partitions], as it is written: "As they encamp, so shall they travel." Just

as in camping, it is invalidated by leaving [these partitions], so, in traveling, it is invalidated by leaving them (Menachoth 95a).^{3,4}

As they encamp, so shall they travel - It was taught: How did Israel travel in the desert? R. Chamma b. Chanina and R. Hoshiya differ on this, one saying: as a box [i.e., Judah in the east, Reuven in the south, Ephraim in the west, and Dan in the north]; the other, as a beam [i.e., in a straight line: Judah, Reuven (behind), Ephraim, and Dan]. The one who says: as a box [bases himself on]: "As they encamp, so shall they travel." The one who says: as a beam [bases himself on Dan's being referred to as] (10:25): "the rearward of all the camps throughout their hosts" (Yerushalmi Eruvin 5:1). 5-7

As they encamp, so shall they travel - Their traveling is hereby being likened to their encamping, viz: Just as their encamping was by Divine command, so, their traveling (Ibid.).8

2:20 And nearby, the tribe of Menasheh. And the leader of the children of Menasheh, Gamliel the son of Pedatzur.

And nearby [ve'alav] the tribe of Menasheh - From here it is derived that alav denotes proximity [and is not to be understood literally, as "upon him"] (Menachoth 96a).9

3:1 And these are the generations of Aaron and Moses, on the day the L-rd spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai.

And these are the generations of Aaron and Moses - It was taught: R. Shmuel b. Nachmani said in the name of R. Yonathan: If one teaches his friend's son Torah, it is as if he had begotten him; for it is written; "And these are the generations of Aaron and Moses," followed by (3): "These are the names of the sons of Aaron" — to teach that Aaron begot them and Moses taught them, for which reason they are called by his [Moses'] name (Sanhedrin 19b).^{1,2}

3:4 And Nadav and Avihu died before the L-rd in offering strange fire before the L-rd in the desert of Sinai; and they

did not have sons. And Elazar and Ithamar officiated as priests in the presence of Aaron their father.

and they did not have sons - It was taught: Abba Chanan says in the name of R. Elazar: All who do not beget children deserve to die, as it is written: "And Nadav and Avihu died ... and they did not have sons." If they had sons, they would not have died (Yevamoth 64a).

and they did not have sons - If they had sons, they would take precedence to Elazar and Ithamar; for all who take precedence in inheritance take precedence in [assuming a position of] honor (*Torath Cohanim, Shemini,* 10:12).⁴

3:13 For Mine is every first-born. On the day that I smote every first-born in the land of Egypt, I consecrated to Myself every first-born in Israel. From man until beast, they shall be unto Me; I am the L-rd.

they shall be unto Me - It was taught: R. Yochanan said: The first-born were consecrated in the desert, and did not depart [from this state of consecration until they entered the land]. Whence is this derived? From: "they shall be unto Me" — they shall remain in their state of being [consecrated] (Bechoroth 5a).

3:26 And the hangings of the court, and the screen of the door of the court, which is by the tabernacle, and by the altar roundabout, and its cords for all of its service.

by the tabernacle and by the altar - The altar is hereby likened to the tabernacle, viz.: just as the tabernacle is ten cubits, so, the altar (Zevachim 59b).⁶

3:31 And their charge shall be the ark, and the table, and the menorah, and the altars, and the vessels of the sanctuary with which they minister, and the screen and all its service.

and the altars - It was taught: All the vessels in the Temple required

immersion [after the festival because of the possibility of their having become unclean] except the golden altar and the brass altar. The brass altar, as it is written (*Exodus* 20:21): "An altar of earth shall you make for Me" [i.e., Since it was affixed to the earth, it was regarded as an altar of *earth*, which does not require immersion]; the golden altar, it being written: "and the *altars*," the two altars being likened to each other (*Chagigah* 27a).⁷⁻⁹

3:32 And the leader of the leaders of the Levites, Elazar the son of Aaron the priest, in charge of the guardians of the holy keep.

And the leader of the leaders of the Levites, Elazar - It was taught: R. Yehoshua b. Levi said: Elazar was a duke of dukes. R. Yehudah Berabbi says: He was an amarkal. Why was he called "amarkal"? Because he was master [mar] of all [kol], in spite of which (so we are here being taught), there is no special privilege in "the palace of the King" [Elazar being assigned a multitude of duties] (Yerushalmi Shabbath 10:3). 10,11

3:38 And those who encamp before the tabernacle towards the east, before the tent of meeting eastward, shall be Moses and Aaron and his sons, keeping the keeping of the sanctuary for the keeping of the children of Israel; and the stranger that draws near shall die.

keeping the keeping of the sanctuary for the keeping - It was taught: The priests keep guard in three places in the Temple. Whence is this derived? R. Ashi said: From: "keeping the keeping of the sanctuary for the keeping" (Tamid 26a).¹²

and the stranger that draws near shall die - What is the intent of "stranger"? If "stranger," literally, this [halachah] has already been stated (10). It must mean, then, a "stranger" to that particular service. From here it is derived that if one whose service was singing, assumed for himself his neighbor's service of guarding the gate, he incurred the death penalty [at the hands of Heaven] (Erchin 11b).¹³

3:39 All who were counted of the Levites, whom Moses and Aaron counted at the command of the L-rd according to their families, every male one month and upwards, twenty-two thousand.

and Aaron - It was taught: Why are there diacritical points over the name "Aaron"? To indicate that he was not included in that count [because of his singular distinction] (Bechoroth 4a).¹⁴

3:41 And you shall take the Levites for Me — I am the L-rd — in place of all the first-born among the children of Israel, and the cattle of the Levites in place of all the first-born among the cattle of the children of Israel.

And you shall take the Levites - All the Levites were likened to one another in respect to their halachic status [This has various halachic ramifications] (*Ibid.*).¹⁵

3:45 Take the Levites in place of all the first-born among the children of Israel, and the beast of the Levites in place of their cattle, and the Levites shall be unto Me; I am the L-rd.

in place of their cattle - This ["beast"] teaches us that one lamb of a Levite can exempt [for redemption purposes] several first-born asses of an Israelite (*Ibid.* b).¹⁶

and the Levites shall be unto Me - "and they shall be" — They shall remain in their state [of Levite, vis à vis the laws of redemption of the first-born], even throughout the generations [and not only in the desert] (Ibid.).¹⁷

3:47 And you shall take five shekels for every man; according to the shekel of the sanctuary shall you take it, twenty gerah to the shekel.

And you shall take five, etc. - How was this done? He brought twenty-

two thousand ballots and wrote upon them "Levite"; and on two hundred and seventy-three [the surplus of first-born Israelites over the number of Levites], he wrote "five shekalim." After mixing them up and placing them in the ballot box, he said: "Draw your ballots." To those who drew "Levite," he said: "You have already been redeemed by a Levite"; to those who drew "five shekalim," he said: "Give your redemption money and go" (Sanhedrin 17a).

3:48 And you shall give the money to Aaron and his sons, the redemption of the surplus among them.

And you shall give the money to Aaron and his sons - The redemption money for the first-born is given to the males of the priesthood, it being written: "And you shall give the money to Aaron and his sons" (Rambam 1:10 Bikkurim).¹⁹

4:3 From thirty years and upwards until fifty years, all that enter the host, to do the work in the tent of meeting.

From thirty years - And elsewhere it is written (8:24): "From twenty-five years." How is this to be reconciled? Twenty-five, for studying; thirty, for working. From here it is derived that if one does not see blessing in his studies after five years, he will not see it thereafter (Chullin 24a).^{1,2}

4:7 And upon the table of showbread they shall spread a cloth of blue, and put on it the dishes, and the spoons, and the bowls, and the jars for libations, and the regular bread shall be upon it.

and the regular bread shall be upon it - From here it is derived that the show-bread does not become invalidated by leaving the encampment (Menachoth 95a).³

4:12 And they shall take all the vessels of ministration with which they minister in the sanctuary, and put them into a

cloth of blue. And they shall cover them with a covering of tachash skin and put them on a bar.

with which they minister - It was taught in the school of R. Yishmael: "all the vessels of ministration with which they minister in the sanctuary" — [the implication in the Hebrew is] two vessels for one ministration. This teaches us that if one sprinkling bowl were placed inside another and the blood received in it, it is valid. Why so? For it still retains the essential manner of ministration (Yoma 58a).

with which they minister in the sanctuary - It was taught: All the vessels wrought by Moses in the desert were consecrated by their anointment; thereafter, they were consecrated by their service. Whence is this derived? From: "all the vessels of ministration with which they minister in the sanctuary." Scripture links their consecration to their ministration (Sanhedrin 16b).

with which they minister in the sanctuary - From here ["in the sanctuary"] it is derived that the ministering vessels are not used on a bamah [a temporary altar] (Zevachim 119b).6

4:13 And they shall maintain the altar and spread upon it a cloth of purple.

And they shall maintain [vedishnu] the altar - It was taught: R. Yehudah says: What is the intent of: "vedishnu the altar"? They shall feed it, as it is written (Deuteronomy 31:20): "and they have eaten, and sated themselves, and grown fat" [vedashen] (Yerushalmi Yoma 4:6).

4:15 And when Aaron and his sons have finished covering the tabernacle and all of the vessels of the sanctuary for the moving of the camp — after that the sons of Kehoth shall come to carry them; but they shall not touch anything holy lest they die. This is the burden of the children of Kehoth.

the burden of the children of Kehoth - It was taught: R. Elazar said: If one carries a load higher than ten tefachim [from the ground in a public

thoroughfare] on the Sabbath, he is liable; for such was "the burden of the children of Kehoth." And whence is it derived that the burden of the children of Kehoth [was higher than ten tefachim]? From [the specifications of] the ark. For the master said: The ark was nine tefachim and its covering, one tefach, making it ten. And we learned: Every load borne by staves [on the shoulders] was one-third above [the shoulders] and two-thirds below, so that the ark was more than ten tefachim above the ground [the minimum height of the carrier being eighteen tefachim, and the ark descending six and two-thirds tefachim from the pole] (Shabbath 92a).8,9

4:16 And the charge of Elazar the son of Aaron the priest is the oil for the light, and the sweet incense, and the daily meal offering, and the anointing oil, and the charge of all the tabernacle and all that is in it respecting the sanctuary and its vessels.

And the charge of Elazar, etc. - If one carries on the Sabbath, whether in his right hand or his left hand, in his lap or on his shoulder, he is liable, for such was "the burden of the children of Kehoth," as it is written: "and the charge of Elazar the son of Aaron the priest is the oil for the light, and the sweet incense, and the daily meal offering, and the anointing oil": "the oil for the light," in his right hand; "the sweet incense," in his left hand; "the daily meal offering," slung over his arm. Where was "the anointing oil"? In a small jar on his belt [i.e., "in his lap"] (Yerushalmi Shabbath 10:3). 10,11

4:18 Do not cut off the tribe of the families of the Kehothi from the midst of the Levites.

Do not cut off, etc. - It was taught: If one dies by the age of fifty, this is "cutting-off"; for it is written: "Do not cut off the tribe of the families of the Kehothi from the midst of the Levites, and this do for them" — "Do for them" that which will enable them to keep their eyes from "feeding upon" the holy of holies, as it is written (20): "That they not come to see when they cover the holy things, lest they die." And it is written (Numbers 8:25): "And at the age of fifty they [the Levites] shall

return from the ranks of the service" [so that "cutting-off" (which results from abuse of that service) does not obtain after the age of fifty] (Yerushalmi Bikkurim 2:1).12

4:19 And this do for them that they live and not die when they approach the holy of holies: Aaron and his sons shall come and set them, each man to his service and to his burden.

each man to his service - From here it is derived that he does not enter upon his service until he has grown to man's estate (*Rambam 3:7*, *Kli Hamikdash*).¹³

4:20 That they not come to see when they cover the holy things, lest they die.

That they not come to see, etc. - It was taught: If one steals the kisvah, zealots may strike him dead. What is "the kisvah"? R. Yehudah says: a ministering vessel, as it is written: "and the jars [kesoth] for libations." And where is this [i.e., that he may be struck dead] intimated? In: "That they not come to see when they cover [which occasionally means 'steal'] the holy things, lest they die" (Sanhedrin 81b). 14,15

Nasso

4:25 And they shall bear the curtains of the tabernacle and the tent of meeting, its covering and the covering of the *tachash* skins which is above it, and the screen for the door of the tent of meeting.

its covering and the covering of the tachash skins - The upper covering [that of tachash skins] is hereby likened to the lower covering [the twelve curtains], viz.: Just as the lower covering is called a "tent" in respect to the laws of tent-uncleanliness, so the upper covering is called a "tent" (Shabbath 28a). 16

4:47 From thirty years and upwards, until fifty years — all who come to perform the service of service and the service of bearing in the tent of meeting.

to perform the service of service - It was taught: Whence is the institution of the singing of the Levites derived in Scripture? Balvati said in the name of R. Yochanan: From: "to perform the service of service." Which service is it that requires a service [before it]? The singing [of the Levites, which is performed during the libations of the sacrificial service] (*Erchin* 11a).¹⁷

5:2 Command the children of Israel that they send out of the camp every leper and everyone with a [genital] discharge, and everyone that is unclean by [contact with] a body.

that they send out of the camp - It was taught: R. Yossi says: It is not the place which exalts the man [who abides there], but the man who exalts the place. For as long as the tent of meeting was standing, there obtained the Scriptural behest: "... that they send out of the camp every leper and everyone with a discharge"; but as soon as the covering was

rolled up [for traveling], those with a discharge and the lepers were permitted to enter, [the *place* losing its exaltedness upon the departure of the *man*] (*Ta'anith* 21b).

that they send out of the camp - Rava said: It is written: "that they send out of the camp, etc. ... Outside of the camp shall you send them." What is the intent of this [seeming repetition]? To teach that wherever "Outside of the camp [i.e., the azarah (the sanctuary court)] you shall send them" obtains, "that they send them out of the camp" [i.e., the sanctuary itself] obtains; and wherever "Outside of the camp you shall send them" does not obtain, "that they send them out of the camp" does not obtain. From here we derive that those unclean by contact with a body, who force their way into the sanctuary on a Pesach in which the offering may be brought [in the azarah] in a state of uncleanliness — from here we derive that they are not liable for entering the sanctuary in a state of uncleanliness (Pesachim 95b).²

every leper and everyone with a discharge - Let it be stated [only] that one unclean by contact with a body [is sent out], and I would say: If those unclean by contact with [another's] body are sent out, how much more so those with leprosy or with a discharge [where the uncleanliness comes from their own body]! [Why, then, must the latter be explicitly stated?] There is an instance in which lepers and those with a discharge are sent out and those with dead-body uncleanliness are not sent out. And which is that? The instance in which the Pesach offering is brought in a state of [dead-body] uncleanliness; [and it is for such an instance that it is stated that lepers and those with discharges are sent out, the a fortiori argument not obtaining] (Pesachim 66b).^{3,4}

and everyone with a discharge - "and everyone with a discharge" — to include one that has a seminal flow; "and everyone that is unclean" — to include one that is unclean by contact with a creeping thing. What is the intent of "every leper"? Since "everyone with a discharge is written" [for the afore-mentioned reason], "every leper" is also written (Ibid. 67a,b).

5:3 From male until female shall you send them. Outside of the camp shall you send them; and they shall not make unclean their camps in whose midst I dwell.

From male until female - similar to "male" and "female," who can acquire proto-uncleanliness [av hatumah], hence excluding earthen vessels, which cannot acquire proto-uncleanliness; if one brings them into the sanctuary, he is not liable (Eruvin 104b).6

From male until female - R. Nachman said in the name of Rav: A tumtum [one whose sex is in doubt] and a hermaphrodite who witnessed a white or a red discharge are not liable for entering the sanctuary [in a state of uncleanliness], it being written: "From male until female" — a definite male; a definite female. If so, this halachah should obtain for all states of uncleanliness [and not only for the discharge type]! [This is not so, for] it is written: "From male" — from the uncleanliness which comes from a male [i.e., the discharge type] (Niddah 28b).^{7,8}

From male until female - Both adults and minors are hereby connoted (Sifrei).9

Outside of the camp - What is the intent of this [seeming repetition]? I might think that the concern is only that they not touch the ark or its carriers and that they may isolate themselves [within the camp itself]; it is, therefore, written: "Outside of the camp shall you send them" (Ibid.).¹⁰

shall you send them - to include a tumtum and a hermaphrodite with an uncleanliness other than the white or red [discharge] type (Ibid.). 11

shall you send them - to include vessels, and to include him who cannot be sent away [of himself] (*Ibid.*).¹²

and they shall not make unclean their camps - It was taught: I might think that those with discharge uncleanliness and those with dead-body uncleanliness are sent to the same camp; it is, therefore, written: "and they shall not make unclean their camps" — each category has its distinct camp (*Pesachim* 67a).¹³

and they shall not make unclean their camps - This is an exhortation against entering the sanctuary in a state of uncleanliness (Makkoth 14b).¹⁴

and they shall not make unclean their camps - [From here it is derived

that one who enters the sanctuary in a state of uncleanliness receives stripes. And though the general rule is that stripes are not administered for transgression of a negative commandment linked to a positive one (the positive one in this case being: "that they send out of the camp, etc."), this instance is different in that the positive commandment precedes the negative one (i.e., The transgression could have been avoided by the implementation of the positive commandment)] (*Ibid.* 15a).¹⁵

5:4 And the children of Israel did so, sending them outside the camp; as the L-rd spoke to Moses, so did the children of Israel do.

so did they do - What is the intent of this [seeming repetition]? To teach that the unclean ones themselves did not resist (Sifrei).16

5:6 Speak to the children of Israel: A man or a woman, if they do of all the sins of man, to be faithless to the L-rd, and that soul be guilty,

A man or a woman - It was taught: For transgression of any negative commandment, both men and women are liable, it being written: "A man or a woman, if they do of all the sins of man." Scripture hereby likened a woman to a man with respect to all the punishments of the Torah (Kiddushin 35a).¹⁷

and that soul be guilty - [It is not written: "and they be guilty," but: "and that soul be guilty"] to include a convert, a tumtum [one whose sex is in doubt], and a hermaphrodite (Sifrei).18

5:7 Then they shall confess their sins which they did, and, and he shall return his debt in principal, and its fifth shall he add to it; and he shall give it to whom he owes it.

Then they shall confess their sins - It was taught: R. Nathan says: "Then they shall confess their sins which they did" — This is the prototype for the necessity of confession before death (*Ibid.*).¹⁹

and he shall give it to whom he owes it - It was taught: R. Nathan says: Whence is it derived that if one has a claim of a *maneh* against his neighbor, who, in turn, has such a claim against his neighbor — whence is it derived that it is taken from the last and given to the first? From: "and he shall give it to whom he *owes* it" [though he not necessarily be the one from whom he borrowed it] (*Pesachim* 31a).²⁰

5:8 And if the man has no redeemer to whom to return the debt, the debt which is returned to the L-rd, [shall go] to the priest, aside from the ram of atonement, with which atonement shall be made for him.

And if the man has no redeemer - Now is there a man in Israel who has no redeemers? Scripture is speaking of the theft of [i.e., that which is stolen from] a convert who dies without heirs] (Bava Kamma 109a).^{21,22}

And if the man has no redeemer - What is the intent of: "the man"? For a man [i.e., an adult who is a convert] you must make a search to determine whether or not he has redeemers [i.e., Jewish sons, who can inherit him]; for a minor you need not make such a search, it being obvious that he has no redeemers (*Ibid.* b).²³

And if the man has no redeemer - This tells me only of a man. Whence do I derive the same for a woman? "which is returned" [redundant in context] subsumes both (*Ibid.*).²⁴

And if the man has no redeemer - It was taught: If one stole from a convert and swore [falsely] to him [that he had not stolen], and he [the convert] died, he pays the principal and an additional fifth to the priests, and a guilt-offering to the altar, as it is written: "And if the man has no redeemer to whom to return the debt, the debt which is returned to the L-rd, to the priest, aside from the ram of atonement, with which atonement is made for him" (*Ibid.* 110a).²⁵

to return the debt [ha'asham] - Rava said: If one returns the theft of a convert at night, he has not fulfilled his obligation: if he returns it by halves, he has not fulfilled his obligation. Why so? For Scripture calls it [the debt] "asham" [lit., "a guilt-offering," which cannot be brought at night or by halves] (Ibid.).²⁶

to return the debt [ha'asham] - Rava said: Priests do not divide on the basis of one "theft of a convert" [to one priest] for one "theft of a convert" [to another priest, but both are divided between them]. Why so? For Scripture calls it "asham" [lit., "a guilt-offering," and such offerings are divided in the second manner] (Ibid.).²⁷

the debt [ha'asham] which is returned - The Rabbis taught: "asham" is the principal; "which is returned" is the additional fifth. But perhaps "asham" is the ram! [This cannot be, for] "aside from the ram of atonement" indicates that "asham" is the principal. But perhaps "asham" is the additional fifth! [This cannot be, for] "and he shall return his asham in principal, and its fifth shall he add to it" indicates that asham is the pricipal (Ibid. 109a).²⁸

the debt [ha'asham] which is returned - It was taught: "asham" is the principal; "which is returned" is the additional fifth, and the verse is speaking of the theft [gezel] of a convert. But perhaps "which is returned" is kefel [the "double payment"] and the verse is speaking of stealing [geneivah] from a convert! [("gezel" is open robbery; "geneivah," covert stealing, and they are subject to different halachoth)]. [This cannot be, for] "and he shall return his debt berosho" [lit., "by its head"] indicates that Scripture is referring to money paid "by the head" [i.e., the principal] (Ibid.). 29,30

which is returned to the L-rd, to the priest - Rava said: One has not fulfilled his obligation if "the theft of a convert" [which he returns to the priest] does not contain [at least] the value of a perutah for each priest [of that watch]. Why so? For it is written: "the debt which is returned" — There must be a [meaningful] "return" to each priest (Ibid.).³¹

to the L-rd, to the priest - The L-rd has acquired it and given it to the priest of that watch. But perhaps he may give it to whichever priest he wishes! [This cannot be, for] "aside from the ram of atonement, with which atonement shall be made for him" indicates that Scripture is referring to the priest of that watch [i.e., he gives both the "theft" and the ram to the same person] (*Ibid.* 109b).³²

to the L-rd, to the priest - The Rabbis taught: Whence is it derived that if the thief were a priest, he must not say: Since it [i.e., the theft of a

convert] goes to the priests, and it is already in my possession, let it remain with me — and, what is more, it follows a fortiori, viz.: If a priest receives that of others, should he not retain his own! It [the fact that he must not say this] is derived: "to the priest" [here] - "to the priest" (Leviticus 27:21), in respect to a field of holding [where such an interdiction obtains] (Ibid.).³³

with which atonement shall be made - It was taught: If one returned the theft before he brought the guilt-offering, he has fulfilled his obligation, it being written: "with which atonement shall be made," implying that it had not yet been made [when the theft was returned] (*Ibid.* 111a).³⁴

5:9 And all offerings of all the holy things of the children of Israel, which they offer to the priest, to him shall it be.

And all offerings - It was taught: R. Akiva says: [What is the intent of: "And all offerings"?] Scripture is hereby teaching us that if one wishes to give his entire granary as an offering [terumah], he may do so, so long as he leaves something over [to qualify what was given, as an "offering" from the produce] (Sifrei).35

of all the holy things - What is the intent of this? Scripture hereby teaches us that the laws of *terumah* apply to all varieties [of produce] and not just to those specifically indicated (*Ibid.*).³⁶

which they offer to the priest - It was taught: Now is terumah offered to the priest? [i.e., Does he not, rather, come to receive it?] Scripture hereby teaches us that bikkurim [first-fruits, which are presented as offerings,] are given to the priests (Ibid.).³⁷

5:10 And a man, his holy things, to him shall they be. A man, what he gives to the priest, to him shall it be.

to him shall they be - R. Yochanan said: If one has *terumoth* and *ma'asroth* [tithes] and does not give them to the priest, in the end he himself will have need of them [i.e., he will have recourse to the tithe for the poor], as it is written: "And a man [midrashically: 'who withholds']

his holy things, to him shall they be" [forthcoming from others, viz., as the tithe for the poor] (*Berachoth* 63a).³⁸

to him shall they be - The Rabbis taught: Whence is it derived that to the priest who performs the sacrifice belongs its service [i.e., its flesh] and its skin? From: "And a man [here, the priest] his holy things, to him shall they be" (Bava Kamma 109b).³⁹

to him shall they be - I might think that the priest could forcibly seize the priestly gifts; it is, therefore, written: "And a man, his holy things, to him shall they be" — The owner shall have the option of giving them to whichever priest he wishes (Sifrei).⁴⁰

to the priest, to him shall it be - It was taught: If one gave the money [i.e., "the theft of a convert"] to the men of that watch and then died [before bringing the guilt-offering], his heirs cannot take it from them, it being written: "A man, what he gives to the priest, to him shall it be" (Bava Kamma 110a).41

to him shall it be - R. Nachman b. Yitzchak said: Whoever has terumoth and ma'asroth and gives them to the priest is destined to grow rich, as it is written: "A man [midrashically: 'who'] gives to the priest, to him [the giver] shall it be" (Berachoth 63a).42

5:12 Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: A man, a man, whose wife goes astray and is faithless to him.

Speak to the children of Israel, etc. - R. Yochanan said: Why is the section of sotah [a faithless wife] juxtaposed with that of terumoth and ma'asroth? To teach that if one has terumoth and ma'asroth and does not give them to the priest, he will have recourse to the priest by reason of his wife [i.e., by reason of her becoming a sotah and requiring the administration of the bitter waters by the priest] (Ibid.).⁴³

and say to them - to include one's betrothed and one who awaits him for levirate marriage in the halachah of kinui [forewarning] (Sotah 24a).⁴⁴

and say to them - to include converts (Ibid. 26a).45

A man, a man - The Rabbis taught: What is the intent of: "A man, a man"? To include the wife of: a deaf-mute, an imbecile, a dullard, one who is abroad, and one who is incarcerated — in which instances beth-din forewarns the woman [if she is deporting herself immodestly] towards invalidating her kethubah [her marriage contract] (Ibid. 27a).46

whose wife goes astray - Resh Lakish said: One does not transgress unless there enters into him a spirit of idiocy, as it is written: "A man, a man, whose wife goes astray" [tistheh]; it is written to be pronounceable as "tishteh" ["leaves her senses"] (Ibid. 3a).47

whose wife goes astray - Scripture speaks of those who are fit to be "wives" — to exclude a widow married to a high-priest, and a divorcée or a *chalutzah* [one who has performed the *chalitzah* ceremony to break a levirate connection] who are married to a regular priest (Sifrei).⁴⁸

and is faithless to him [ma'al] - From here it is derived that "ma'al' signifies change [from one bond to another]; and thus is it written (I Chronicles 5:25): "And they were faithless ["vayema'alu"] to the G-d of their fathers, and they went astray after the gods of the peoples of the land" (Me'ilah 18a).⁴⁹

and is faithless to him - It is not written: "and is faithless to the L-rd," but: "and is faithless to him" [her husband]. From here it is derived that a woman who believes that extra-marital relations are not sinful, is nonetheless forbidden to her husband [if she engages in them] and is not in the category of one who was forced [and who is permitted to her husband — for even she realizes well enough that she has been faithless to him] (Maharik 161).

5:13 And a man lie with her, the lying of seed, and it be hidden from the eyes of her husband, and she shall have secreted herself [with the man she was warned against], and she be unclean, and there be no witness in her, and she were not seized,

And a man lie - A man, and not a minor (Sotah 26b).51

And a man lie - Kinui [forewarning] obtains in respect to all illicit

relations, except those with a minor and with "one who is not a man." To exclude what? R. Pappa said: To exclude relations with an animal, there being no adultery with an animal (*Ibid.*).⁵²

And a man lie with her - It is her lying that forbids her [to her husband], and not her sister's [i.e., If her husband lives illicitly with her sister, she [the wife] does not thereby become forbidden to her husband (Yevamoth 95a).⁵³

the lying of seed - to exclude his forewarning her of flesh contact alone [in which instance the bitter waters are non-operative] (*Ibid.* 26b).⁵⁴

and it be hidden from the eyes of her husband - This teaches us that if he were blind, the waters are not administered, ["from the eyes" implying that he does have sight] (*Ibid.* 27a).⁵⁵

and it be hidden from the eyes of her husband - and not that her husband see and make himself "unseeing"; but if he knows of it, he is not permitted to scheme that the waters be administered [i.e., As soon as he knows, she is forbidden to him] (Sifrei).⁵⁶

and it be hidden from the eyes of her husband - R. Yannai said: A woman awaiting a levirate marriage is permitted to "her house" [i.e., to go through with that marriage even if she had violated the kinui of the levir], it being written: "and it be hidden from the eyes of her husband" — and not, "from the eyes of her levir" (Yerushalmi Sotah 2:5).⁵⁷

and she shall have secreted herself, and she be unclean -We were not informed what constitutes the minimum time limit for "being secreted"; however: "and she shall have secreted herself and she be unclean" indicates that it is as long as it takes for her to become unclean, i.e., as long as it takes for coitus, i.e., as long as it takes for he'arah [the initial stage]. And how long is that? As long as it takes to fry an egg and swallow it (Sotah 4a).⁵⁸

and she shall have secreted herself and she be unclean - We are hereby taught that once she has secreted herself, the Torah considers her unclean (Yerushalmi Sotah 1:2).⁵⁹

And she be unclean - Rav said: The tzarah [co-wife, (i.e., a woman married to the same man as another)] of a sotah is forbidden [in

levirate marriage because of the prohibition of the *sotah* herself]. Whence is this derived? "Uncleanliness" is written in respect to a *sotah*, as it is in respect to the other illicit relations [and she, therefore, is governed by the same *halachah* as they in respect to levirate marriage] (Yevamoth 11a).⁶⁰

and she be unclean. The Rabbis taught: Why the three-time repetition: "clean," "clean," and "she be unclean" in this section? One, vis à vis her husband; one, vis à vis the man who lived with her; one, vis à vis [the eating of] terumah [if her husband is a priest] (Sotah 28a).61

and she be unclean - The Rabbis taught: What is the intent of: "and she be unclean" and (14): "and she not be unclean"? Scripture hereby teaches us that in a case of doubt she is forbidden (*Ibid.*).62

and there be no witness - Is Scripture speaking of two witnesses or even of one? It is written (*Deuteronomy* 19:15): "There shall not arise one witness against a man." Does not "witness" tell me that he is one? Why must "one" be specifically written? To serve as a prototype, viz.: Wherever "witness" is written, two are understood unless "one" is explicitly stated. Scripture is thus telling us here that if there are not two witnesses to her adultery, but only one, and she were not seized, [but consented], she is forbidden [to her husband and does not drink the bitter waters] (*Ibid.* 2a).63

and there be no witness in her - In forewarning one's wife, R. Yehoshua says: He forewarns her in the presence of two witnesses and causes her to drink by the word of two witnesses [that she secreted herself], it being written: "and there be no witness in her" — "in her," and not in the forewarning; "in her," and not in the secreting [i.e., It is only "in her" (to forbid her to her husband as having committed adultery) that one witness is sufficient, but not for the other elements] (Ibid. b).64

and there be no witness in her - If there are witnesses in a different country against a *sotah*, the waters do not "examinne" her [i.e., they are inoperative], as it is written: "and there be no witness in her" — where none know of her, to exclude an instance such as this where there *are* those who know of her (*Ibid*. 6a).⁶⁵

and there be no witness in her - If one witness said: I saw her commit

adultery, she does not drink. Why so? For it is written: "and there be no witness in her" — any variety of witness [i.e., even one] (*Ibid.* 31a).66

and there be no witness in her - This tells me only of a valid witness. Whence do I derive [for inclusion in this halachah] even a man-servant or a maid-servant? From: "and there be no witness in her" — any kind of witness (Yerushalmi Sotah 6:2).67

and she were not seized - But if she were seized [forcibly] she is permitted [to her husband]. And there is another, who, though not seized, is permitted. Who is that? One who was forced in the beginning and acquiesced at the end. [Though she is "not seized" at the second stage, she is permitted because of its proceeding from the first] (Kethuvoth 51b).68

and she were not seized - But if she were seized, she is permitted. And there is another, who, though not seized, is permitted. Who is that? One whose betrothal was erroneous [i.e., was based on a condition which was not realized] (*Ibid.*).⁶⁹

and she were not seized - But if she were seized, she is permitted. And there is another, who, though seized, is forbidden. Who is that? The wife of a priest (*Ibid.*).⁷⁰

and she were not seized - But if she were seized, she is permitted. And there is another, who, though seized, is forbidden. Who is that? One who acquiesced in the beginning, but was forced at the end (Yerushalmi Sotah 4:4).71

5:14 And there shall have passed over him a spirit of rancor and he shall have forewarned his wife and she shall have become unclean; or if there shall have passed over him a spirit of rancor and he shall have forewarned his wife and she shall not have become unclean.

And there shall have passed over him a spirit of rancor-It was taught: R. Meir was wont to say: A man sins in secret, and the Holy One Blessed be He denounces him in public, as it is written: "And there shall have passed over him a spirit of rancor." "passing over" connotes

proclamation, as in (Exodus 36:6): "And Moses commanded and they passed over a sound [i.e., proclaimed] in the camp" (Sotah 3a).⁷²

And there shall have passed over [ve'avar] him a spirit of rancor - It was taught in the school of R. Yishmael: Why did the Torah grant credence to a single witness in the instance of a sotah [to cause her to be forbidden to her husband]? Because she is suspect, having been forewarned, and having, notwithstanding, secreted herself [with the man she was warned against.] R. Pappa asked Abbaye: But is "forewarning" not written after "secreting" and "uncleanliness"? He answered: "Ve'avar" is to be understood as: "And there shall have passed over him" [i.e., before "secreting" and "uncleanliness"] (Ibid.)."

And there shall have passed over him a spirit of rancor - A man does not forewarn his wife unless there enters into him a spirit of purity, as it is written: "And there shall have passed over him a spirit of rancor" (Ibid.)."

And there shall have passed over him a spirit of rancor - It was taught: R. Eliezer b. Yaakov says: Because Scripture writes (*Leviticus* 19:17): "Do not hate your brother in your heart," I might think that one such as she is also included; it is, therefore, written: "And there shall have passed over him a spirit of rancor and he shall have forewarned [lit., 'and he *shall forewarn*'] his wife" (*Ibid.*).⁷⁵

and he shall have forewarned [vekinai] his wife - What is signified by "Kinui"? R. Nachman b. Yitzchak said: "Kinui" connotes forewarning, as in (Joel 2:18): "Then the L-rd forewarned [vayekanai] concerning His land" (Ibid.).⁷⁶

and he shall have forewarned his wife - It was taught: R. Akiva says: "And he shall have forewarned [lit., 'and he shall forewarn'] his wife" — It is his duty to do so (*Ibid.*).⁷⁷

and he shall have forewarned his wife [eth ishto] - "eth ishto" — even one who is "partially" his wife. This includes in the framework of forewarning one to whom he is betrothed or one who awaits him for levirate marriage (Yerushalmi Sotah 4:1).⁷⁸

5:15 Then the man shall bring his wife to the priest, and he shall bring her offering for her, the tenth part of an *ephah* of barley meal. He shall pour no oil upon it, nor shall he put frankincense upon it; for it is an offering of rancor, an offering of remembrance, a reminder of sin.

Then the man shall bring his wife - This teaches us that the husband [himself] brings his wife to the priest. But even so [i.e., Even though Scripture requires no chaperones], the sages have ruled: Two Torah scholars are sent along with him lest he live with her on the way, [his wife being forbidden to him before she drinks the bitter waters] (Sotah 7a). 79

Then the man shall bring his wife - If her husband died before she drank the bitter waters, she does not drink, and she does not claim her *kethubah* [the marriage contract], it being written: "Then the *man* shall bring his wife." And because she does not drink, she does not claim her *kethubah* (*Ibid.* 24a).80

Then the man shall bring his wife - to exclude the wife of a deaf-mute, an imbecile, a dullard, one who is abroad, and one who is incarcerated; for though beth-din forewarns them to make them ineligible for their kethubah award, it does not cause them to drink [the bitter waters]. I might think that when her husband returns [from abroad] or is released from prison he may cause her to drink; it is, therefore, written: "And he shall have forewarned ... Then he shall bring" — The one who forewarns is the one who brings [his wife to drink the bitter waters] (Ibid. 27a).81

and he shall bring her offering for her - From here ["for her"] R. Yehudah derived: A man brings for his wife every offering which devolves upon her — even if she ate forbidden fats, and even if she desecrated the Sabbath (Yerushalmi Sotah 1:1).82

it is an offering of rancor - If the offering of a *sotah* is not processed to that end, it is invalid, for "it" ["it is an offering"] is stated in that regard [i.e., only "it," and not what is not specifically intended as such] (Menachoth 4a).⁸³

a reminder of sin - A tanna taught in the presence of R. Nachman: The

surplus of a "rancor-offering" [i.e., money in excess of what is needed] goes towards a gift-offering. He [R. Nachman] responded: You have said well. "A reminder of sin" is stated in that regard, and, in respect to a sin-offering it is written (Leviticus 10:17): "And it, he has given to you to forgive the sin of the congregation." Just as the surplus of a sin-offering goes towards a gift-offering, so does the surplus of a "rancor-offering" (Ibid.).84

5:16 And the priest shall draw her near and stand her before the L-rd.

And the priest shall draw her near - The Rabbis taught: The drink is not administered to two sotahs at the same time, it being written: "And the priest shall draw her near" — she alone. What is the rationale behind this? So that she not draw strength [to deny her sin] from the presence of the other (Sotah 8a).85

and stand her - From here it was derived: Her man-servants and maidservants should not stand together with her because she draws support from their presence (Sifrei).86

5:17 And the priest shall take consecrated waters in an earthen vessel; and of the soil that shall be on the floor of the tabernacle shall the priest take and put it in the water.

consecrated waters - "consecrated" refers to what was concecrated in a vessel, namely, the waters of the layer (*Ibid.*).⁸⁷

in an earthen vessel - It is written here: "an earthen vessel," and, in respect to a leper (*Leviticus* 14:5): "an earthen vessel." Just as there, a new one is indicated; here, too, a new one [is required] (*Sotah* 15b).⁸⁸

and of the soil, etc. - The Rabbis taught: "and of the soil that shall be": I might think that he could prepare it outside and bring it in; it is, therefore, written: "on the floor of the tabernacle." If only that were written, I might think that he could dig there with spades; it is, therefore, written; "that shall be." How is this to be resolved [in an

instance where no soil obtains there?] If soil is there, bring [from there]; if soil is not there, place it there (*Ibid.*).⁸⁹

the soil - If he could not find soil, he must not bring ashes, but he may use decayed vegetable matter, which is considered soil (*Ibid.* 16a).90

and put it in the water - How much does he put in? Enough for it to be visible on the surface of the water, as it is written: "and of the soil that shall be on the floor of the tabernacle shall the priest take and put it in the water" (*Ibid.* 15b).⁹¹

5:18 And the priest shall stand the woman before the L-rd, and he shall uncover the head of the woman, and he shall place in her hands the offering of remembrance — it is an offering of rancor — and in the hand of the priest will be the bitter, blighting waters.

And the priest shall stand the woman - From here it is derived that if she were lame, she did not drink (*Ibid.* 27b).⁹²

And the priest shall stand the woman - And above (16) it is written: "and stand her." Did she sit down in the interim? The intent is, rather, that attendant upon the original standing he uncovers her hair (Yerushalmi Sotah 1:5).93

before the L-rd - Where is that? The eastern gate of the door of the Gate of Nikanor, where the drink was administered to the sotahs (Sotah 8a).⁹⁴

and he shall uncover the head of the woman - The Rabbis taught: "And he shall uncover the head of the woman": This tells me only of her head. Whence do I derive [the halachah for the uncovering of] her body? From: "the woman." If so, why is it written: "and he shall uncover her head"? This teaches us that the priest dishevels her hair (Ibid.).95

and he shall uncover the head of the woman - It was taught: R. Yishmael says: "and he shall uncover the head of the woman": This teaches us that the daughters of Israel cover their hair. And though there is no proof for this, there is an allusion to it, it being written (II

Samuel 13:19): "And Tamar [after Amnon lived with her] placed a covering on her head" (Sifrei).96

and he shall place in her hands - Why in her hands? To weary her [so that she will the more readily confess if she is unclean] (Sotah 14a).97

and he shall place in her hands - From here it is derived that if her hand were amputated she did not drink (*Ibid.* 27b). 98

and in the hand of the priest will be the bitter waters - Scripture hereby tells us that the waters turn bitter only in the hand of the priest (Sifrei).⁹⁹

the bitter waters - It was taught: The father of Shmuel said: It was necessary to place something bitter into the waters. Whence is this derived? From: "the bitter waters" — the waters that were bitter already (Sotah 20a). 100

the bitter, blighting [ha'mearerim] waters - It was taught: I might think [that the waters had] the appearance of [clear] water; it is, therefore, written: "ard" [similar to "arer" - "black"in Arabic]. If "ard," I might think [that the waters were] black as ink; it is, therefore, written: "waters." How are these conditions satisfied? By [mixing as much water with the soil as would give] an appearance of water and of ard, an amount estimated by the sages to be half a log of water from the laver (Yerushalmi Sotah 2:2). 101,102

the bitter, blighting [hame'arerim] waters - R. Tanchuma said: The numerical equivalent [gematria] of "hame'arerim" [496] corresponds to the total of her 248 organs and the 248 organs of the adulterer (*Ibid.* 5:1).¹⁰³

5:19 And the priest shall cause her to swear, and he shall say to the woman: If no man has lain with you, and you have not strayed uncleanly from your husband, then be clean of these bitter, blighting waters.

And the priest shall cause her to swear - This teaches us that the priest administers the oath, and she does not swear of herself (Sifrei). 104

and he shall say to the woman - The oath of the sotah may be administered in any language, it being written: "and he shall say to the woman" — in any language that she understands (Sotah 32b). 105

and he shall say to the woman - to exclude one who cannot hear (Rambam, Sotah 2:3).¹⁰⁶

If he has not lain - It was taught: Hilni, the queen, had made a golden tablet on which was inscribed the oath of the *sotah*, so that when the scribe would write it out [upon parchment], he would look at the tablet and transcribe it from there. And what was written thereon? "If a man has lain with you" — "If no man has lain with you"; "If you have gone astray" — "If you have not gone astray" (Yoma 37b). 107,108

If he has not lain - When he [the scribe] comes to write the oath, he begins from: "If no man has lain with you ... And you, if you have gone astray, etc.", and he does not write: "May the L-rd render you a curse and an oath," and he does not write: "And the woman shall say: Amen, Amen" (Sotah 17a). 109

If he has not lain - From here it is derived that capital cases are opened with the defense of the accused (Sanhedrin 32b). 110

and you have not strayed - It was taught: R. Meir says: Any stipulation which is not similar to that of the children of Gad and the children of Reuven [(i.e., a stipulation which does not contain, as theirs did, a compound condition, viz.: "If yes, then ... and if no, then ... ")] is no stipulation. If so, it should be written [to complement "If he has not lain with you ... be clean" (hinaki)]: "And if he has lain with you, be choked" [chinaki]! R. Tanchum answered: It is written "hinaki" [which, in the Hebrew, allows its extension into the next verse as: "And you, if you have gone astray, chinaki," thus providing the necessary compound condition] (Kiddushin 62a).111

5:20 And you, if you have gone astray under your husband, and if you have become unclean, and a man has put his lying in you aside from your husband,

under your husband - to exclude one who was forced. Whence is this

derived? Just as "under your husband" implies willingness, here, too, willingness is assumed (Yerushalmi Sotah 1:2).112

and if you have become unclean - to include in the halachah of drinking, the wife of one who is impotent (Ibid. 4:4).113

and if you have become unclean - to include irregular [i.e., anal] intercourse (Sifrei).¹¹⁴

his lying - to include [the "lying"] of one who is impotent [where there is just "lying", but not seed] (*Ibid.*).¹¹⁵

aside from your husband - where the "lying" of the husband precedes that of the adulterer, and not vice versa (Sotah 24b). 116

5:21 Then the priest shall make the woman swear with the oath of the curse, and the priest shall say to the woman: May the L-rd render you an oath and a curse in the midst of your people by the L-rd's causing your thigh to fall and your belly to swell.

Then the priest shall make the woman swear - Rava said: What is the intent of the two oaths mentioned in respect to *sotah* [here and (19)]? One is an oath that contains a curse; the other is an oath which does not contain a curse. What is an oath which contains a curse? R. Ashi said: "I place you under oath that you have not become unclean, and that if you have become unclean the waters shall enter into you" (*Ibid.* 18a). 117,118

and the priest shall say to the woman - This teaches us that he shall not say it to her by way of an interpreter (Yerushalmi Sotah 7:1).¹¹⁹

your thigh, etc. - And further it is written (27): "and her belly shall swell and her thigh shall fall" [in reverse order]. Abbaye said: When he curses, he first curses the thigh [which came first in the act itself] and then the belly, but the waters "examine" in the natural order, first [entering] the stomach and then the thigh. But is it not also written in the curse (22): "to swell the belly and make fall the thigh"? That is the priest's acknowledgement to her that the belly precedes and the thigh follows [in the actual operation of the waters], so that the bitter waters not come to be discredited (Sotah 9b). 120

5:22 And these blighting waters shall enter into your innards, to swell the belly and make fall the thigh, and the woman shall say: Amen, Amen.

and the woman shall say - From here it is derived that a mute woman does not drink (*Ibid.* 27b).¹²¹

and the woman shall say - From here it is derived that a deaf woman does not drink (Yerushalmi Sotah 1:1). 122

and the woman shall say: Amen - If one answers "Amen" to an oath, it is as if he himself had uttered it, as it is written: "and the woman shall say: Amen" (Shevuoth 29b).¹²³

Amen, Amen - To what end does she say: "Amen, Amen" [twice]? Amen, to the curse ["If I am unclean, let them enter into me"]; Amen to the oath ["I have not become unclean"]; Amen, in respect to this man [the suspected adulterer]; Amen, in respect to any other man; Amen, that I have not gone astray either when betrothed or when married; Amen that I have not become unclean; Amen, that I will not become unclean [in which instance the bitter waters operate retroactively] (Sotah 18a,b). 124,125

5:23 Then the priest shall write these curses into a scroll and erase it into the bitter waters.

Then he shall write- Rava said: The scroll of a sotah, which was written before she took the oath is invalid, it being written: "And he shall make her swear," and, only afterwards: "Then he shall write" (Ibid. 17b)¹²⁶

these curses - "curses" — the curses themselves; "the curses" — to include the curses inferred from blessings [i.e., (5:19): "be clean, etc."]; "these" — to exclude [from inclusion in the scroll] the curses in Deuteronomy [in respect to sotah]; "ha'eleh" [equivalent to "ha - these," as it were,] — to exclude the [writing of] the attendant instructions and the answering of Amen (Ibid. 17a). 127,128

these curses - Rava said: A sotah scroll written in reverse order [i.e., "to make fall the thigh and to swell the belly"] is invalid. Whence is this

derived? From: "Then he shall write *these* curses" — in the order in which they were written (*Ibid.* b).¹²⁹

the priest - What is the intent of this [i.e., Why is the pronoun form itself not sufficient in view of the fact that we have been speaking of the priest all along?] I might think that since it is written here: "Then he shall write," and [in respect to writs of divorce (*Deuteronomy* 24:1)]: "Then he shall write her a bill of divorce" — just as there, anyone may write it; here, too [I would think] anyone may write it; it is, therefore, written: "the *priest*" Sifrei). 129*

into a scroll - This teaches us that he writes it not on a tablet, not on paper, and not on hide, but on a scroll [of finished parchment] (Sotah 17a).¹³⁰

into a scroll - Rava said: A sotah scroll written as a letter [i.e., without the ruled lines required for Scriptural writing] is invalid. Why so? For the Torah states: "a scroll" [i.e., similar to a Torah scroll] (*Ibid.* 18a).¹³¹

into a scroll - Rava said: A sotah scroll written on two [separate] sheets is invalid. Why so? It is written: "a scroll," and not two or three scrolls (*Ibid.*).¹³²

and erase it - This teaches us that the writing must be erasable. He, therfore, does not write it with resin-ink or vitriol-ink or with anything else which leaves a permanent impression, but only with plain ink (*Ibid*. 17b).¹³³

5:24 And he shall make the woman drink the bitter, blighting waters, and the blighting waters shall enter into her for bitterness.

And the blighting waters shall enter - Why is this written twice [here and (22)]? To teach that just as the waters probe her, so do they probe him [when they are administered to her] (Ibid. 27b).¹³⁴

5:25 And the priest shall take from the hand of the woman the offering of rancor, and he shall lift the offering before the L-rd, and he shall offer it at the face of the altar.

And the priest shall take, etc. - It was taught: Whence is it derived that the offering of a *sotah* requires "lifting" by the owner? It is derived: "hand" [here] - "hand" from [what is stated in respect to] peace-offerings. It is written here: "And the priest shall take from the hand of the woman," and there (*Leviticus* 7:30): "His hands shall bring." Just as there, the owner [lifts it]; here, too, the owner [i.e., the *sotah*]. And just as there, the priest [lifts it]; here, too, the priest. How is this resolved [i.e., lifting by both the owner and the priest]? The priest places his hand under that of the owner and lifts (*Ibid.* 19a). 135

from the hand of the woman - And not from the hand of her representative; "from the hand of the woman" — If she were in her menstrual period, she did not drink, [being forbidden to enter the azarah at that time] (Sifrei). 136

and he shall lift - Now does he lift it alone? Does he not lift it together with her? [Why, then, does he take it from her hand?] From here it is derived that the priest takes it from the non-consecrated vessel [in which it is brought] and places it in a consecrated vessel, after which he places his hand beneath hers and lifts (Yerushalmi Sotah 3a). 137

and he shall lift and he shall offer - Offering is hereby being likened to lifting, viz., Just as it may be "lifted" the entire day, as it is written (*Leviticus* 23:12): "on the day of your lifting," so it may be offered the entire day (*Megillah* 20b).¹³⁸

and he shall lift and he shall offer - This teaches us that the offering of the *sotah* requires lifting and presentation [at the southwestern corner of the altar] (*Menachoth* 60b).¹³⁹

before the L-rd - I might think that the western [side of the altar (opposite the sanctuary) is meant]; it is, therefore, written: "at the face of the altar." If: "at the face of the altar," I might think the southern [side (facing the ramp) is meant]; it is, therefore written: "before the L-rd." How is this to be reconciled? He presents it at the southwestern corner at the point of the horn and this is sufficient [i.e., He need not place the offering itself upon the altar, but he may present it in a vessel, insuring only that the meal touch the altar] (Sotah 14b). 140

5:26 And the priest shall take from the meal-offering a handful, its memorial portion, and burn it on the altar, and then he shall make the woman drink the water.

its memorial portion - This is the burning of the fistful [which renders it a "memorial" to the L-rd] (Sifrei).¹⁴¹

and then he shall make the woman drink - What is the intent of this? [It was already mentioned (24)]. [It is needed to stress the fact that as long as the impression of the writing remains she does not drink (but must wait until it is completely erased)] (Sotah 19b). 142

5:27 And he shall make her drink the water. And it shall be, if she has become unclean and has been unfaithful to her husband, then the blighting waters will enter into her for bitterness, and her belly will swell and her thigh will fall, and the woman will be a curse in the midst of her people.

And he shall make her drink - The Rabbis taught: What is the intent of [this additional]: "And he shall make her drink"? Has it not already been mentioned? It comes to teach us that if the scroll has been erased and she says I will not drink, she is rebuked and made to drink forcibly (*Ibid.*).¹⁴³

and the woman will be a curse - All will curse by her, saying: Let there befall you what befell her! (Sifrei). 144

in the midst of her people - It was taught: When adultery increased, the bitter waters became inoperative, it being written: "and the woman will be a curse in the midst of her people" — only when her people are moral, and not when they are promiscuous (Yerushalmi Sotah 9:9). 145

5:28 And if the woman has not become unclean, and she is clean, then she shall be absolved, and she shall sow seed.

and she is clean - "clean" [i.e., as established by the waters], and not such a one as has witnesses to her uncleanliness in a distant land [in which instance the waters will not probe her]; "clean," and not such a

one as is [really unclean, but] "defended" [against the waters] by the merits of her ancestors; "she" [i.e., in her own right], and not such a one of whom [i.e., of whose promiscuity] the spinning women speak by the light of the moon [i.e., as a matter of common knowledge] (Sotah 6b). 146

and she is clean - R. Iddi said: This is a frequent observation of the sages: "And if the woman has not become unclean, and she is clean" — As long as she has not been proved to be unclean, she is regarded as clean. This, as opposed to the practice of Yehudah b. Pappus, who used to lock the door on his wife whenever he left his house (Yerushalmi Kiddushin 4:4).147

then she shall be absolved - "then she shall be absolved" — of the curses and of the oaths (Sifrei). 148

and she shall sow seed - If she had had difficult labors in the past, she will now have easy ones; if she had borne only females, she will now bear males; if she had borne short children, she will now bear tall ones; if she had borne swarthy ones, she will now bear fair ones (Sotah 26a).¹⁴⁹

5:29 This is the law of the rancors for a woman who goes astray under her husband and becomes unclean.

This is the law of the rancors - "This" — to exclude a woman's drinking more than once in the context of the same husband and the same suspected adulterer; "the law of" [according to the script, readable as "the laws of"] — to include the woman's drinking [any number of times] in the context of a different husband and a different suspected adulterer (*Ibid.* 19a). 150

This is the law of the rancors - "the law of" — one law for many rancors [i.e., for many suspected adulterers] (Krituth 9b). 151

This is the law of the rancors - It was taught: He shall warn her: not in the midst of frivolity, or casual talk, or light-headedness, or strife, or fright [but in a reasoned, serious manner]. If he did warn her in one of the above states, what is the halachah? It is as we have said: Wherever

"statute" or "law" is mentioned, the halachah is categorical [i.e., if not observed as stated, it is non-effective] (Yerushalmi Sotah 1:1).152

a woman under her husband - What is the intent of this? To liken the husband to the wife and the wife to the husband, viz.: Just as if he were blind, he does not cause her to drink, so, if she were blind, she does not drink. And just as if she were lame, or an amputee, or deaf, she does not drink, so, if he were one of the above, he does not cause her to drink (Sotah 27a.b).¹⁵³

under her husband - A betrothed woman and one awaiting levirate marriage does not receive her *kethubah*, it being written: "who goes astray under her *husband*" — to exclude one who is [only] betrothed and one awaiting levirate marriage (*Ibid*. 23b). 154

5:30 Or a man over whom there shall pass a spirit of rancor, and he shall warn his wife; and he shall stand the woman before the L-rd, and the priest shall do to her all of this law.

and he shall do to her - to her, specifically. From here it is derived that the sotah scroll must be written with her, specifically, in mind (Rashi on Sotah 18a).¹⁵⁵

all of this law - The entire day is valid for administering the drink to the sotah. Whence is this derived? It is written here: "and the priest shall do to her all of this law," and, elsewhere (Deuteronomy 17:11): "According to the law which they shall teach you, and according to the judgment" — Just as judgment [takes place] in the daytime, so the law is administered by day (Megillah 20b). 156

all of this law - And it is written elsewhere (Deuteronomy 17:11): "According to the law which they shall teach you." Just as there, a beth-din of seventy-one [is referred to]; here, too, a beth-din of seventy-one [is required] — whence it is derived that they would take her up to the great beth-din of Jerusalem [i.e., the sanhedrin] (Sotah 7b).¹⁵⁷

all of this law - Rava said: A sotah scroll which was written at night is not valid. Why so? It is written here: "and the priest shall do to her all

of this law," and, elsewhere (*Deuteronomy* 17:11): "According to the law which they shall teach you, and according to the judgment" — Just as judgment [takes place only] in the daytime, so, the *sotah* scroll must be written by day (*Ibid.* 17b).¹⁵⁸

all of this law - It was taught: If one wrote [and erased] a sotah scroll by writing one letter and erasing it; the next letter, and erasing it, it is invalid, it being written: "and the priest shall do to her all of this law" [i.e., He must write the entire scroll and then erase it] (Ibid. 18a).¹⁵⁹

5:31 And the man will be free of sin, and that woman shall bear her sin.

And the man will be free of sin - The Rabbis taught: "And the man will be free of sin" — When the husband is free of sin, the waters probe his wife; when the husband is not free of sin, the waters do not probe his wife. Therefore, when promiscuity increased, the bitter waters became ineffectual (*Ibid.* 47b).¹⁶⁰

6:2 Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: A man or a woman, if he shall declare to vow the vow of a Nazirite, to be a Nazirite to the L-rd.

Speak, etc. - It was taught: Rebbi says: Why is the section of the Nazirite juxtaposed with that of the *sotah*? To teach that all who witness a *sotah* in her undoing should separate themselves from wine (*Ibid*. 2b).¹

Speak to the children of Israel - Naziritism does not obtain with Kuthites, it being written: "Speak to the children of *Israel*," and not to Kuthites (*Nazir* 61a).²

and say to them - to include servants within the context of Naziritism (*Ibid.*).³

A man - What is the intent of "A man"? To include a youth of thirteen years and one day. Though he may not be able to clearly articulate his vows, they are, nonetheless, valid (Niddah 46a).4

or a woman - If a woman uses the masculine formula for a Nazirite vow,

does she become a Naziritess? R. Yossi said: The entire *subject* of the Nazirite is in the masculine mode, viz.: "A man or a woman, if *he* shall declare to vow" (*Yerushalmi Nazir* 2:2).^{5,6}

if he shall declare - It was taught: R. Eliezer says: It is written: "if he declare" - "if he declare," twice [here and Leviticus 27:2], one for forbidding [something to oneself] and one for permitting [i.e., absolving], this being a Scriptural intimation of the absolution of vows (Chagigah 10a).^{7,8}

if he shall declare - What is the intent of: "if he shall declare"? To include one precocious [enough to clearly articulate a vow], approaching man's estate [from the age of twelve years and a day] as being bound by his vows (*Temurah* 2b).9

if he shall declare - willingly, and not under coercion (Sifrei).10

the vow of a Nazirite to be a Nazirite - What is the intent of: "a Nazirite to be a Nazirite"? To equate epithets of the Naziritic vow with the Naziritic vow, and signals of the Naziritic vow with the Naziritic vow (Nedarim 3a).11

the vow of a Nazirite to be a Nazirite - Naziritism is being likened to vowing, and vowing, to Naziritism, viz.: Just as with Naziritism, signaling the assumption of Naziritism is equivalent to [verbally] assuming it, so, with vowing; signaling the vow is equivalent to uttering it. And just as with vows, non-fulfillment and delay are transgressions; so, with Naziritism. And just as with vows, a father may nullify the vows of his daughter; and a husband, the vows of his wife; so, with Naziritism (*Ibid.*).^{12,13}

a Nazirite to be a Nazirite - This teaches us that one Naziritic period can be superimposed upon another (Nazir 5a).¹⁴

to be a Nazirite to the L-rd - It was taught: Shimon Hatzaddik said: Once a man came to me from the south. His eyes were beautiful, he was very handsome, and his hair was wavy. I said to him: "My son, what prompted you to destroy this beautiful hair?" He answered: "I was a shepherd for my father in our town. Once, while drawing water from the well, I gazed at my reflection, and my evil inclination sprang upon me and threatened to snatch me from the world, whereupon I said to it:

Empty one, wherefore do you vaunt yourself in a world that is not yours, where you are destined to be consigned to worms and maggots? I swear, I shall shear you in the name of Heaven!" I then arose, and kissing him on the head, said to him: "May Nazirites like you multiply in Israel! Of such as you it is written: 'A man ... if he shall declare to yow the yow of a Nazirite, to be a Nazirite to the *L-rd*" (*Ibid.* 4b). 15

6:3 From wine and strong drink he shall separate himself. Vinegar of wine and vinegar of strong drink he shall not drink, and any steeping of grapes he shall not drink, and grapes, wet or dry he shall not eat.

From wine and strong drink - It is written here: "strong drink," and, elsewhere (*Leviticus* 10:9); "strong drink." Just as there, a *revi'ith* [one fourth of a *log*, is indicated]; here, too, a *revi'ith* [is understood] (*Yerushalmi Nazir* 6:1).¹⁶

From wine and strong drink - It was taught: R. Eliezer says: "wine" is diluted; "strong drink," undiluted. But perhaps it is the opposite! [This cannot be, for] it is written (*Numbers* 28:7): "Pour out a libation of strong drink" — Libations are undiluted, and not diluted (*Sifrei*).¹⁷

From wine and strong drink, etc. - "From wine and strong drink" — particular; of all that is made from the grapevine" — general; "from the kernels to the husk" — a reversion to the particular. Particular-general-particular: The rule is of the nature of the particular, viz.: Just as the particular specifies a fruit [the grape] and the residue of a fruit, so the rule embraces fruit and the residue of fruit (Nazir 34b).\(^{18}\)

From wine and strong drink - If one says: I am a Nazirite in respect to kernels, or husks, or shaving, or uncleanliness, he is a Nazirite [in all respects], and all details of Naziritism apply to him. Why so? For it is written: "From wine and strong drink he shall separate himself" [i.e., Even a stated abstention from wine and strong drink alone makes him "separate" (i.e., a Nazirite) in respect to all things] (Ibid. 3b). 19

From wine and strong drink he shall separate himself - This forbids wine of *mitzvah* as well as non-*mitzvah* wine, as stated by Rava: If one takes an oath to drink wine [making the drinking a *mitzvah*] and then

declares himself a Nazirite, the Naziritism superimposes itself upon the oath [and nullifies it] (*Ibid.*).²⁰

From wine and strong drink he shall separate himself - It is wine that is forbidden, but other non-grape] extracts are permitted (*Ibid.* 4a).²¹

From wine and strong drink he shall separate himself - I might think that he may not even make medicinal or commercial use of wine; it is, therefore, written: "he shall not drink" — It is [conventional] drinking that is forbidden, but he may make use of it medicinally or commercially (Sifrei).²²

and any steeping of grapes - R. Avahu said in the name of R. Yochanan: In respect to all of the prohibitions of the Torah a permitted element does not combine with a forbidden one [to form the minimum forbidden quantity] except in respect to the Naziritic prohibitions, it being written: "steeping." [e.g., If one "steeps" half an olive-size of grapes in a similar amount of bread, he transgresses] (Nazir 35b).²³

and any steeping of grapes - What is the intent of "steeping"? To render the flavor [halachically] equivalent to the agent itself, so that if one steeps grapes in water, giving it the flavor of wine, he is liable [for Naziritic transgression in drinking it]; and this serves as a prototype for all similar instances in the Torah (*Ibid.* 37a).²⁴

and grapes, wet - What is the intent of "wet"? To include half-ripe grapes (Yerushalmi Nazir 6:2).²⁵

wet or dry - What is the intent of this? To impose liability for each in itself [i.e., Eating "wet" and "dry" grapes together is regarded as two separate transgressions though one fruit is eaten]. And this serves as a prototype for all similar instances in the Torah. Just as here, where there are two names and one kind, there is liability for each in itself, so, in all similar instances (Nazir 38b).²⁶

6:4 All the days of his Naziritism, of all that is made from the grape-vine, from the kernels to the husk, he shall not eat.

All the days of his Naziritism - A Nazirite who drank wine at the end of his period of Naziritism [before he brought the offering, etc.] receives

stripes. Whence is this derived? From: "All the days of his Naziritism"— to include the days after the termination of his period of Naziritism [as in the above-cited instance] as equivalent to the days before it (*Ibid*. 14b, 15a).^{27,28}

of all that is made - Rava said: If a Nazirite ate a kernel and a husk, he receives stripes only once. Why so? Stripes are not administered [individually] for [specific elements in] a generic injunction (*Ibid.* 38b).²⁹

from the grapevine - If one says: I am a Nazirite in respect to grogereth or deveilah [certain types of figs], Beth Hillel say: He is not a Nazirite. Why so? For it is written: "of all that is made of the grape-vine" (Ibid. 9a).³⁰

from the kernels to the husk - This teaches us about those things forbidden to a Nazirite that they combine with each other [to form the minimum forbidden quantity, an olive-size] (*Ibid.* 4a).³¹

from the kernels to the husk [mechartzanim ve'ad zag] - it was taught: R. Yossi says: "chartzanim" are the inside; "zagim," the outside. R. Yosef said: According to whom do we translate: "mechartzanim ve'ad zag" as: "from the inside to the outside"? According to R. Yossi (Ibid. 34b, 39a).³²

from the kernels to the husk - Now if in the end all grapevine derivatives are included, why specify: "from the kernels to the husk"? To teach that wherever there is a "particular-general" structure [as there is here, i.e., "from wine and strong drink" — "of all that is made from the grapevine"], the general cannot be interpreted [by extension] as necessarily partaking of the nature of the particular, but only as the general enlarging upon the particular, unless Scripture explicitly reverts to the particular, as it does in the instance of Nazir [i.e., "from the kernels to the husk" (See commentary 18)] (Ibid. 34b).³³

to the husk - Ravina said: to include the small, intervening grapes (*Ibid.*).³⁴

to the husk - This teaches us that "pained eating" [as in eating the husk] does not free him from liability. For we might think that if one is not liable for "pained eating" on Yom Kippur, [the penalty for

transgression of] which is extremely severe, should he not certainly be exempt from such liability in respect to the relatively lenient Naziritic state? It is, therefore, written: "from the kernels to the husk he shall not eat" (Sifrei).³⁵

6:5 All the days of the vow of his Naziritism a blade shall not pass over his head. Until the fulfillment of the days whereon he is a Nazirite to the L-rd, holy shall he be; he shall let grow the locks of the hair of his head.

All the days of the vow of his Naziritism - A Nazirite who shaved his head at the end of his period of Naziritism [before he brought the offering, etc.] is liable. Whence is this derived? From: "All the days of the vow of his Naziritism a blade shall not pass over his head" — to include the days after the termination of his period of Naziritism [as in the above-cited instance] as equivalent to the days before it (Nazir 14b, 15a).36

the vow of his Naziritism - R. Avahu said: Wherever it is written: "He shall not eat," both eating and the derivation of benefit are understood to be interdicted. But is it not written in respect to a Nazirite: "from the kernels to the husk he shall not eat," in spite of which we learned: Wine may be used as an *eruv* for a Nazirite! Mar Zutra said: The instance of the Nazirite is different, it being written in that regard: "his Naziritism"— it shall be his [i.e., even though he may not drink the wine, it is still "his" in respect to such halachoth as the above, the interdict not being Scriptural, but personal] (Pesachim 23a).³⁷

the vow of his Naziritism - This teaches us that his vow is ancillary to his Naziritism, and not his Naziritism to his vow, [so that he cannot vow a "limited" Naziritism] (Sifrei).³⁸

a blade shall not pass - The Rabbis taught: "a blade": This tells us only of a blade. Whence do we derive tearing, plucking, and trimming [as likewise prohibited]? From: "holy shall he be; he shall let grow the locks of the hair of his head." Now if in the end we thus include everything, why specify "a blade"? For we did not learn that the final [mandated] shaving is to be with a blade. [it is, therefore, indicated here] (Nazir 39b).³⁹

- a blade shall not pass It is read: "lo ya'avor" ["a blade shall not pass" (and not: "lo ya'avir" "He shall not pass a blade"), forbidding the act] either through his own or through another's agency. This teaches us that in respect to the prohibition of shaving, the shaver is equivalent to the one shaved [relative to liability] (Ibid. 44a).40
- a blade shall not pass R. Yochanan said in the name of R. Yishmael: The halachah projects the law. The Torah states: "a blade," and the halachah embraces any instrument (Sotah 16a).41
- a blade shall not pass But if it did pass, he is liable. This teaches us that shaving interrupts the count [and he must start counting again]. [And how much does it interrupt? Thirty days. Whence is this derived?] From: "he shall let grow the locks of the hair of his head." How long does this take? Thirty days (Yerushalmi Nazir 86:3).^{42,43}

Until the fulfillment of the days - I might think that the minimum of days, i.e., two, is intended; it is, therefore, written: "holy shall he be; he shall let grow the locks of the hair of his head." "Growing of hair" is not less than thirty days (Nazir 6b).⁴⁴

Until the fulfillment of the days - The Nazirite state, in general, is of thirty days duration. Some say that it is derived from (*Deuteronomy* 21:13): "And she shall bewail her father and her mother a month of days": Just as "days" there is thirty, so, "days" here (*Ibid.*).⁴⁵

Until the fulfillment of the days - The Nazirite state, in general, is of thirty days duration. Some say that this is implied in: "Until the fulfillment of the days." How many full days are there [in a month]? Thirty (Ibid.).46

holy shall he be - R. Elazar said: All who assume a fast are called "holy," for it is written: "holy shall he be; he shall let grow the locks of the hair of his head." Now if one who denies to himself only one thing [i.e., the cutting of the hair] is called "holy," how much more so one who denies to himself all things [by assuming a fast]! (Ta'anith 11a).⁴⁷

holy shall he be - If one betrothes a woman with the hair of a Nazirite, she is not betrothed. If he sold it, and betrothed her with the money he received, she is betrothed, for it is written: [variant reading] "holy shall be the growth of the locks" — His growth shall be holy. But let us say,

then, that just as with a sanctified object, the sanctity is transfered to the money [for which it is exchanged] and it itself loses its sanctity, so with the hair of the Nazirite! [This cannot be, for] is it then called "sanctified" [which would make it subject to such laws of transfer]? It is called "holy" [i.e., It itself is holy] (Kiddushin 57b).48

holy shall he be - The Nazirite state, in general, is of thirty days duration. Whence is this derived? R. Mathna says: From: "he shall be" ["yiheyeh"]. The numerical equivalent [gematria] of "yiheyeh" is thirty (Nazir 5a).49

holy shall he be - What is the intent of this? Because it is written (18): "And the Nazirite shall shave at the door of the tent of meeting," I might think that only the hair of one who shaves as prescribed is forbidden and imposes constraints. How would I know that the same applies if he were shaved by vandals? It is, therefore, written: "holy shall he be" — in any event (Sifrei).50

holy shall he be, etc. - to exclude a Nazirite who became leprous, who must shave all of his hair [even if the time for doing so falls out in the middle of his period of Naziritism] (*Ibid.*).⁵¹

he shall let grow the locks - And it is written elsewhere [in respect to priests] (Ezekiel 44:20): "And their locks they shall not send forth," whence it is derived that "sending forth" connotes "growing." Therefore, if one says: "I take it upon myself to send forth locks," he is a Nazirite (Nazir 3a).⁵²

he shall let grow the locks - The Nazirite state, in general, is of thirty days duration. Whence is this derived? R. Yashiyah says: From: "he shall let grow the locks of the hair of his head" — The growing of hair is not less than thirty days (*Ibid* 6b).⁵³

6:6 All the days of his Naziritism to the L-rd, upon the soul of a dead one he shall not come.

All the days of his Naziritism - A Nazirite who became unclean at the end of his period of Naziritism receives stripes, it being written: "All the days of his Naziritism," to make the days after the termination of his

period of Naziritism [as in the above-cited instance] equivalent to the days before it (*Ibid* 14b, 15a).⁵⁴

upon the soul of a dead one - I might think that even beasts are herein subsumed, as it is written (*Leviticus* 24:18): "One who strikes the soul of a beast"; it is, therefore, written: "upon the soul of a dead one he shall not come," Scripture referring to a human being (*Ibid.* 48a).⁵⁵

he shall not come - Rabbah b. R. Huna said: Scripture states explicitly (7): "he shall not become *unclean*," so that: "he shall not *come*" is an exhortation against uncleanliness [by contact] and against entering ["the tent of the dead"] (*Ibid.* 42a).⁵⁶

6:7 For his father and his mother; for his brother and for his sister, he shall not become unclean for them in their death. For the crown of his G-d is on his head.

For his father and for his mother - See commentary on Leviticus 21:11

and for his sister - It was taught: If one [i.e., a Nazirite,] were on the way to slaughter his Paschal lamb and to circumcise his son and he heard that one of his kin had died, I might think that he should return and become unclean for them — this is negated by: "he shall not become unclean." I might think that just as he may not become unclean for them, so he may not become unclean [in the above instance] for a meth mitzvah [one that has no one to bury him]; it is, therefore, written: "and for his sister" — For his sister he may not become unclean, but he does become unclean for a meth mitzvah (Nazir 48b).⁵⁷

he shall not become unclean - Naziritism does not obtain with Kuthites, it being written: "For his father and for his mother ... he shall not become unclean" — Naziritism obtains only where uncleanliness obtains; this excludes Kuthites, with whom uncleanliness does not obtain (*Ibid.* 61b).⁵⁸

in their death - [He shall not become unclean for them] when they die [but he may attend upon them before their death] (*Ibid*. 63a).⁵⁹

in their death - "in their death" he may not become unclean for them,

but he may become unclean for them in their leprous or zivah [genital discharge] state (Ibid. 48a).60

in their death - "in their death" he may not become unclean for them, but he may stand at their eulogy and in the mourner's row (Sifrei).⁶¹

For the crown of his G-d - It was taught: Whence is it derived that a master may force his servant to desist from his Naziritism? From: "For the crown of his G-d is on his head" — [Naziritism is irrevocable] only for one who has only one Master; this excludes a servant, who has another master (Yerushalmi Nazir 9:1).62

on his head - whether or not he has hair (Sifrei).63

6:8 All the days of his Naziritism, holy is he to the L-rd.

All the days - This ["days"] teaches us that there is no Naziritism for hours [in addition to the thirty-day minimum for Naziritism] (Rambam, Nazir 1:3).64

All the days of his Naziritism - What is the intent of this? I might think, because of (5): "until the fulfillment of the days" [that the interdict of shaving applies] only to one whose Naziritism has a term, but not to one who is a life-long Nazirite; it is, therefore, written: "All the days of his Naziritism" (Sifrei).65

holy is he to the L-rd - I might think that this applies to the holiness of [i.e., the interdict against shaving] his hair. But (5): "holy shall he be; he shall let grow the locks of the hair of his head" already applies to the holiness of his hair. How, then, is: "holy is he to the L-rd" to be understood? As applying to the holiness of his body [vis à vis the interdict of becoming unclean] (*Ibid*).66

6:9 And if one die on him, of an instant, suddenly, and he make unclean the head of his Naziritism, then he shall shave his head on the day of his cleansing; on the seventh day, he shall shave it.

of an instant, suddenly - It was taught: "of an instant" — this connotes

inadvertency, as it is written (35:22): "And if of an instant, without hate, he thrust him"; "suddenly" ["pithom"] connotes wilfullness, as it is written (Proverbs 22:3): "And the fools ["pethaim" (similar to "pithom")] transgress and are punished." This teaches us that a Nazirite who becomes unclean, whether unwittingly or willingly, brings an offering (Krituth 9a). 67,68

and he make unclean the head of his Naziritism - This teaches us that Scripture is speaking of a clean Nazirite becoming unclean, and not of a Nazirite who is standing in the cemetery, [who is already unclean before the advent of the new uncleanliness] (Nazir 18a).69

and he make unclean the head of his Naziritism - This teaches us that in respect to uncleanliness [as opposed to the halachah with respect to shaving], the defiler is not equated with the defiled [i.e., Only he, the Nazirite, transgresses in making himself unclean, and not another, who makes him unclean] (*Ibid.* 44a).⁷⁰

then he shall shave his head - He shall shave all of it, and not just part of it. This teaches us that if he leaves over two hairs, he has done nothing (Yerushalmi Nazir 6:3).⁷¹

then he shall shave his head - It is his head that he shaves and not all of his [bodily] hair (Sifrei).⁷²

on the day of his cleansing - When? On the day of the sprinkling of the blood, the seventh. I might think [that he shaves] even though the blood has not been sprinkled; it is, therefore, written: "on the day of his cleansing" — on the day of his sprinkling, the seventh (*Ibid.*)."

on the seventh day, he shall shave it - It was taught: Whence is it derived that shaving interrupts the count even for an unclean Nazirite [during his seven-day cleansing period]? From: "then he shall shave his head on the day of his cleansing." [This having been written,] why is it necessary to add: "on the seventh day he shall shave it"? This teaches us that [if he shaved it in the middle of tha afore-mentioned period], he must shave it again [after seven days] (Yerushalmi Nazir 6:3).⁷⁴

on the seventh day, he shall shave it - This tells me only of the seventh day. Whence do I derive the ninth and tenth [as also valid for shaving]? From: "he shall shave it" [in any event]. This tells me only of the day.

Whence do I derive the night [as valid for shaving]? From: "he shall shave it." This tells me only of the shaving for an unclean Nazirite. Whence do I derive she same for the shaving of a clean one? From: "he shall shave it" (Sifrei).⁷⁵

he shall shave it - This teaches us that if he leaves over two hairs he has done nothing. R. Acha b. R. Ikka said: This serves as a Scriptural base for the principle of "most is like all"; for since Scripture emphasizes [only] in the instance of the Nazirite: "on the seventh day he shall shave it," the implication is that only here all of it must be shaved, but in general, "most is like all" (Nazir 42a).

6:10 And on the eighth day he shall bring two turtle doves or two young pigeons to the priest to the door of the tent of meeting.

And on the eighth day - It is written here: "eighth," and, elsewhere [in relation to the first-born] (*Exodus* 22:29): "and on the eighth day you shall give it to Me." Just as there, both the eighth day itself and the eighth day onward is valid [for giving]; here, too, both the eighth day itself and the eighth day onward is valid [for bringing the offering] (*Sifrei*)."

And on the eighth day he shall bring - When does he bring? When he has immersed himself and the sun has gone down (*Nazir* 44b).⁷⁸

And on the eighth day he shall bring - R. Abba b. Memel asked in the presence of R. Aimi: It is written: "And on the eighth day he shall bring." If he delayed and did not bring them on the eighth day, does he thereby transgress? He answered: Wherever the intent is to permit, [as in this instance, where the intent is to permit the offering of both at the same time], there is no transgression. And what is it the intent to permit here? [A burnt-offering] "lacking the proper time" [this being the usual epithet for a burnt-offering whose sin-offering has not yet been sacrificed. The fact that in this instance he is permitted to bring both at the same time rules out the transgression of delay] (Yerushalmi Rosh Hashanah 1:1)."

And on the eighth day he shall bring - It was taught: "On the seventh

day he shall shave it, and on the eighth day he shall bring": From here it was derived: What is the procedure for the shaving of the unclean Nazirite? First he shaves and then he brings the offering. If he first brings the offering and then shaves, he has not fulfilled his obligation (Sifrei).80

two turtle doves - From here it was derived (Kinnim 2:5): Turtle doves cannot be substituted for pigeons nor pigeons for turtle doves (Ibid.).81

to the door, etc. - This teaches us that his is the obligation of caring for them until they have been brought to the door of the tent of meeting (*Ibid.*).⁸²

6:11 And the priest shall offer one as a sin-offering and one as a burnt-offering, and he shall atone for him for having sinned against the soul; and he shall make holy his head on that day.

and he shall atone for him - Naziritism does not obtain with Kuthites, it being written: "and he shall atone for him" — one with whom atonement obtains, to exclude Kuthites, with whom atonement [through sin-offering] does not obtain (Yerushalmi Nazir 9:1).83

for having sinned against the soul - It was taught: R. Elazar Hakappar says: "and he shall atone for him for having sinned against the soul": Now against which soul did he sin? But [he did, indeed, sin] by depriving himself of wine. And does it not follow a fortiori, viz.: Now if this one, who deprived himself only of wine, is called a sinner, how much more so one who deprives himself of everything! — whence it is derived that all who assume a fast are called sinners (Nedarim 10a).84

for having sinned against the soul - It was taught: R. Shimon says: The early saints, when they wished to bring a burnt-offering, brought it as donors; [when they wished to bring] a peace-offering, they brought it as donors. But they did not do so by assuming Naziritism, so as not to be called sinners, it being written: "and he shall atone for him for having sinned against the soul" (*Ibid.*).85

on that day - On the day of the bringing of his offerings. Whence is this

derived? From: "and he shall atone for him for having sinned against the soul, and he shall make holy his head on that day" — first: "and he shall atone for him" [through the offerings]; then: "and he shall make holy" (Nazir 18a).86

on that day - though he has not brought his guilt-offering (Ibid.).87

6:12 And he shall devote to the L-rd the days of his Naziritism, and he shall bring a lamb of the first year as a guilt-offering, and the first days shall fall off because he made unclean his Naziritism.

And he shall devote, etc. - It was taught: "And he shall devote to the L-rd the days of his Naziritism, and he shall bring a lamb of the first year as a guilt-offering": What is the intent of this [i.e., Should the guilt-offering not precede the "devotion"?] Because we find in respect to all the guilt-offerings of the Torah that they are categorical [requirements for the effecting of a new condition], I might think that this [guilt-offering of the Nazirite] is also categorical [in respect to the reassumption of his Naziritism]; it is, therefore, written: "And he shall devote ... and he shall bring" — Though he has not yet brought [the guilt-offering], he may re-devote himself [to Naziritism] (*Ibid.* b). 88,89

and the first days shall fall off - If one declares himself a Nazirite for a hundered days and he becomes unclean at the beginning of that period [i.e., on the first day], I might think that it [i.e., the count] is interrupted; it is, therefore, written: "and the first days shall fall off" — There must be first days [plural] to fall off, which does not obtain in this situation (*Ibid.* 19b).90

and the first days shall fall off - R. Pappa said to Abbaye: These "days" that are being referred to — [Is the understanding] that one day [of Naziritism] has passed and the second begun, or that two days have passed and the third begun? He went and asked Rava, who said: It is written: "and they [implying at least two] shall fall off" (Ibid.).91,92

and the first days shall fall off - The Nazirite state, in general, is of thirty days duration. Some say that this is derived from: "and the first days shall fall off" — The days that Moses and his beth-din permitted

[Elazar and Ithamar not to shave upon the death of their brothers, Nadav and Avihu], which are not fewer than thirty days [this being the minimum time required for "locks" to grow] (Yerushalmi Nazir 1:3).⁹³

because he has made unclean his Naziritism - What is the intent of this? To teach that uncleanliness interrupts the count, and not the drinking of wine (Niddah 44a).⁹⁴

because he has made unclean his Naziritism - This teaches us that unclean days fall off [from the count, i.e., days of uncleanliness (other than death-uncleanliness, which revokes the *entire* count) are not reckoned within the count]. Why not? Rebbi said in the name of R. Shimon b. Lakish: It is written (5): "He shall let grow the locks of the hair of his head" — Days of growing the hair [in a state of cleanliness] are part of the count; days [counted] towards removing the hair [as in a state of leprous uncleanliness] are not part of the count (Yerushalmi Nazir 7:3).95,96

6:13 And this is the law of the Nazirite: On the day of the fulfillment of the days of his Naziritism, he shall bring himself to the door of the tent of meeting.

And this is the law of the Nazirite - There is one law for a "Nazirite of days" and for a life-long Nazirite (Sifrei).97

on the day of the fulfillment - This teaches us that he brings it in the daytime and not in the evening (Sifrei Zutta).98

he shall bring himself - He shall bring himself; others are not to bring him (Sifrei).99

6:14 And he shall offer up his sacrifice to the L-rd: one lamb of the first year without blemish as a burnt-offering, and one ewe-lamb of the first year without blemish as a sin-offering, and one ram without blemish as a peace-offering.

as a sin-offering, and one ram - The ram is being likened to a sin-offering. To what end? To teach that if he shaved after offering one of the three it is valid (Zevachim 55a).¹⁰⁰

6:15 And a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, and wafers of unleavened bread smeared with oil, and their meal-offering and their drink-offerings.

and their meal-offering and their drink-offering - Scripture here speaks of his burnt-offering and his peace-offering. But may it not be that even the sin-offering requires libations? It is written [to negate this] (17): "And the ram shall he offer as a sacrifice of peace-offering to the L-rd ... its meal-offering and its drink-offering." The ram was included in the general category [of all the offerings]. Why was it singled out for special mention? For purposes of comparison, viz.: Just as a ram is characterized by being offered as a vow and a gift, so, all that is so characterized [such as a burnt-offering, requires a meal-offering and a drink-offering — to exclude a sin-offering, which does not come by way of vow or gift] (Menachoth 91b). 101

6:16 And the priest shall draw close before the L-rd, and he shall offer his sin-offering and his burnt-offering.

before the L-rd - It was taught: Wherever "before the L-rd" is written, the Gate of Nikanor is intended (Yerushalmi Sotah 1:5). 102

and he shall offer his sin-offering - This teaches us that all of the elements in its offering must be specifically intended towards a sin-offering (Zevachim 8a).¹⁰³

6:17 And the ram shall he offer as a sacrifice of peace-offering to the L-rd for the basket of unleavened bread, and the priest shall prepare its meal-offering and its drink-offering.

shall he offer as a sacrifice of peace-offering - This teaches us that it must be intended as a peace-offering (*Ibid.* 4b).¹⁰⁴

shall he offer as a sacrifice of peace-offering - What is the process of the shaving of cleansing? He brings the sin-offering, the burnt-offering, and the peace-offering. He slaughters the peace-offering and shaves over it, it being written: "And the ram shall he offer [lit., 'do'] as a

sacrifice of peace-offering." What is the intent of "do"? An act [i.e., shaving,] is to precede it (Yerushalmi Nazir 6:7). 105

for the basket of unleavened bread - This teaches us that the basket is obligatory and the slaughtering of the ram consecrates it; therefore, if it were not slaughtered to that specific end [i.e., as a peace-offering], the bread is not consecrated (*Menachoth* 46b).¹⁰⁶

6:18 And the Nazirite shall shave at the door of the tent of meeting the head of his Naziritism, and he shall take the hair of the head of his Naziritism and he shall place it upon the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace-offering.

And the Nazirite shall shave, etc. - It was taught R. Shimon Shazuri says: "And the Nazirite shall shave at the door of the tent of meeting": A *Nazirite* shaves at the door of the tent of meeting, and not a Naziritess. Why not? So that the young priests not be enticed by her (*Nazir* 45a).¹⁰⁷

at the door of the tent of meeting - I might think that [he shaves], literally, at the door of the tent of meeting; but it is written: "And he shall take the hair of the head of his Naziritism and place it under the fire" — he who is lacking only "taking" and "placing," and not he who is lacking taking, bringing [into the room where the peace-offering is cooked] and placing. [The shaving must be done, then, in the room where the peace-offering is cooked]. What, then, is the intent of: "at the door of the tent of meeting"? Scripture is speaking of the peace-offering [i.e., "The Nazirite who stood at the door of the tent of meeting during the slaughtering of the peace-offering shall shave his hair (in the room where the peace-offering is cooked) etc."] (Ibid.). 108, 109

at the door of the tent of meeting - It was taught: Abba Chanan says in the name of R. Elazar: "And the Nazirite shall shave at the door of the tent of meeting": So long as the door of the tent of meeting is not open, he does not shave (*Ibid.*).¹¹⁰

at the door of the tent of meeting - It was taught: A leprous Nazirite is always in a state of "confirmed leprosy" until he brings his guilt-

offering. R. Yaakov Droma asked in the presence of R. Yossi: Let them remedy his state [i.e., Let him be permitted to reckon days of Naziritism, shave, and bring his offering] so that he will be able to drink wine. He answered: It is written: "And the Nazirite shall shave at the door of the tent of meeting" — Only he [is permitted to shave] who may come to the door of the tent of meeting, to exclude one such as the above, who may not come to the door of the tent of meeting (Yerushalmi Nazir 8:2).111,112

and he shall place it upon the fire - It was taught: The hair of a Nazirite is forbidden [i.e., It is forbidden to benefit from it] and it forbids [derivation of benefit from] an admixture of which it forms some part. Whence is this derived? From: "and he shall take the hair of the head of his Naziritism and he shall place it upon the fire" [which clearly indicates that it is forbidden] (Yerushalmi Avodah Zarah 5:12). 113

under the sacrifice of the peace-offering - The Rabbis taught: He takes the broth, spills it on "the hair of the head of his Naziritism" and places it under the cauldron of the peace-offering" [implying (in the Hebrew) that] part of the sacrifice itself shall be under it. And if he were a Nazirite who had become unclean and he placed it under the cauldron of the sin-offering or of the guilt-offering, it is valid, it being written: "sacrifice," to include the sin-offering and the guilt-offering (Niddah 45b).^{114,115}

6:19 And the priest shall take the cooked shoulder of the ram, and one unleavened cake from the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and he shall place them upon the hands of the Nazirite after his shaving of his Naziritism.

And the priest shall take the shoulder - The ram of the Nazirite is eaten by its owner. Whence is this derived? From: "And the priest shall take the shoulder" — whence it follows that the rest is eaten by the owner (Zevachim 55a).¹¹⁶

the cooked [beshelah] shoulder of the ram - It was taught: "beshelah" implies "whole" [i.e., It is first cooked and then separated from the ram.] R. Shimon b. Yochai says: "beshelah" implies only that it must be

cooked together with the ram [but it is separated before the cooking] (Chullin 98a).117

and one unleavened cake - This teaches us that if it were broken or part were missing, it is invalid; and, similarly, with the wafer: If it were broken or part were missing, it is invalid (Sifrei).¹¹⁸

and he shall place them upon the hands of the Nazirite -The lifting of the meal-offering of the Nazirite obtains both with men and women alike, it being derived: "hand" [here] -"hand," in respect to sotah. It is written here: "and he shall place them upon the hands of the Nazirite," and there (5:19): "and he shall place in her hands" (Kiddushin 36b).¹¹⁹

6:20 And the priest shall lift them, a lifting before the L-rd. It is holy to the priest with the breast of lifting and the thigh of raising; and after, the Nazirite may drink wine.

and after, the Nazirite may drink wine - The Rabbis taught: "and after" — after a single act [i.e., the offering, though he has not yet shaved]. Whence is this derived? It is written here: "and after," and (19): "after his shaving of his Naziritism": Just as there, after a single act, so, here, after a single act (Nazir 46a). 120,121

6:21 This is the law of the Nazirite who shall vow his offering to the L-rd for his Naziritism aside from what his hand attains. According to the vow that he vows, thus shall he do according to the law of his Naziritism.

This is the law of the Nazirite - Whether he has hands [with which to lift the meal-offering] or does not have hands; whether he has hair or does not have hair (*Ibid.* b).¹²²

his offering to the L-rd for his Naziritism - This teaches us that his Naziritism must precede his offering, and [the consecration of] his offering may not precede his Naziritism (Yerushalmi Nazir 2:9). 123

his offering to the L-rd for his Naziritism - This teaches us that he requires his [stipulated] offerings for his Naziritism, and no other

offerings for his Naziritism [i.e., If he adds offerings, they are not sacrificed with the complements of Naziritic offerings] (Sifrei).¹²⁴

aside from what his hand attains - Now does a Naziritic offering depend on what his hand can attain? [The intent is, rather:] "his offering to the L-rd for his Naziritism" — what he himself offers; "aside from what his hand can attain" — what others offer for him [though it is not "his offering"] (Temurah 10a). 125

thus shall he do - The cakes and the wafers of the Nazirite are mutually indispensable [i.e., If the one is lacking, the other is invalid], it being written: "thus [implying a categorical requirement] shall he do" (Menachoth 27a). 126

according to the law of his Naziritism - It was taught: If one said: I am a Nazirite after thirty days and a Shimshon [i.e., life-long] Nazirite from now on — R. Chanina said: It is to be assumed that the Naziritism of the Torah [for a thirty-day period] overrides Shimshon Naziritism [so that the latter, which would prevent the shaving required by the former, does not take effect], it being written: "thus shall he do according to the law of his Naziritism" — Naziritism which is law [i.e., Torah], to exclude Shimshon Naziritism, which is not [prescribed by the] Torah (Yerushalmi Nazir 1:2).\(^{127,128}\)

according to the law of his Naziritism — It was taught: I might think that if one said: I vow to be a Nazirite on condition that I be allowed to drink wine and to become unclean by [contact with] the dead — I might think that he satisfies "according to the vow that he vows"; it is, therefore, written: "thus shall he do according to the law of his Naziritism" [implying that his Naziritism must accord with the entire law in that regard] (Sifrei). 129

6:23 Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying: Thus shall you bless the children of Israel: Say to them:

Thus shall you bless - It was taught: R. Yehoshua b. Levi said in the name of Bar Kappara: Why is the section on the priestly benediction juxtaposed with that of the Nazirite? To teach that just as wine is forbidden to a Nazirite, so is it forbidden to the priest making the

benediction — whence it is derived that an inebriated priest may not raise the hands [in benediction] (Ta'anith 26b).¹³⁰

Thus shall you bless - A non-priest who raises his hands [in benediction] transgresses a positive commandment, it being written: "Thus shall you bless" — you, and not strangers; and a prohibition inferred from a positive commandment is [considered] a positive commandment (Rashi on Kethuvoth 24b).¹³¹

Thus shall you bless - The Rabbis taught: "Thus shall you bless" — in the holy tongue. But perhaps any tongue is permitted! [This is not so, for] it is written here: "Thus shall you bless," and, elsewhere (*Deuteronomy* 27:12): "These shall stand to bless the people": Just as there, in the holy tongue; here, too, in the holy tongue (*Sotah* 38a).¹³²

Thus shall you bless - The Rabbis taught: "Thus shall you bless"—standing. But perhaps even sitting is permitted! [This is not so, for] it is written here: "Thus shall you bless," and, elsewhere (*Deuteronomy* 27:12): "These shall stand to bless the people": Just as there, standing; here, too, standing (*Ibid.*).¹³³

Thus shall you bless — The Rabbis taught: "Thus shall you bless" — with raised hands. But perhaps it is permitted without raised hands! [This is not so, for] it is written here: "Thus shall you bless," and, elsewhere (*Leviticus* 9:22): "And Aaron lifted his hands to the people, and he blessed them": Just as there, with raised hands; here, too, with raised hands (*Ibid.*).¹³⁴

Thus shall you bless - It was taught: R. Yehoshua b. Levi said: Any priest who does not go up to give the blessing transgresses three positive injunctions: "Thus shall you bless," "Say to them," and "And they shall place My Name" (*Ibid.* b). 135

Thus shall you bless - It was taught: R. Chelbo said in the name of R. Huna: The priestly blessings are uttered and not translated. Why so? For it is written: "Thus shall you bless" — It is given for blessing, and not for translation (Yerushalmi Megillah 4:11). 136

the children of Israel - This tells me only of the children [lit., "the sons"] of Israel. Whence do I derive [for inclusion in the blessing]

converts, women, and servants? From: "Say to them" — to all of them (Sotah 38a).¹³⁷

the children of Israel - From here it is derived that the priestly blessing is not given where there are fewer than ten [that being the minimum (for ritual purposes) of "the children of Israel"] (Ran, Megillah 3).¹³⁸

Say to them - The Rabbis taught: "Thus shall you bless" — face to face. But perhaps face to back [is intended]? [This is not so, for] it is written: "Say to them" — as a man speaks to his neighbor (Sotah 38a).¹³⁹

Say to them - The Rabbis taught: "Thus shall you bless" — in full voice. But perhaps in a whisper? [This is not so, for] it is written: "Say to them" — as a man speaks to his neighbor (*Ibid.*). 140

Say to them - Abbaye said: It is our practice that when there are [at least] two priests, the reader calls out: "Cohanim!"; but if there is only one, he does not call out: "Cohain!" [but he turns to give the blessing without being called]. Whence is this derived? From: "Say to them"—to two (Ibid.).¹⁴¹

Say to them - R. Chisda said: "Say to them": This teaches us that the reader himself must be an Israelite [i.e., a non-priest, distinct from "them"] (Yerushalmi Gittin 5:9).142

Say to them - It was taught: Whence is it derived that the leader must call upon them [for the priestly blessing]? From: "Say [singular, i.e., the reader,] to them" [the priests] (Sifrei). 143

6:24 The L-rd bless you and keep you.

The L-rd bless you - "The L-rd bless you" — with the explicit blessing, viz. (*Deuteronomy* 28:3-6): "Blessed shall you be in the city and blessed shall you be in the field ... Blessed shall be your basket and your store. Blessed shall you be when you come in ..." (*Ibid.*). 144

and keep you - May He keep for you the covenant of your forefathers, as it is written (*Deuteronomy* 7:12): "And the L-rd shall keep for you the covenant and the lovingkindness which He swore to your forefathers" (*Ibid.*).¹⁴⁵

6:25 The L-rd cause His countenance to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

The L-rd cause His countenance to shine - "to shine" — This refers to the light of Torah, as it is written (*Proverbs* 6:23): "For a *mitzvah* is a lamp, and the Torah, light" (*Ibid.*).¹⁴⁶

and be gracious unto you - Let Him be gracious unto you in [the granting of] your requests, as it is written (*Exodus* 33:19): "And I shall be gracious to whom I shall be gracious." Another view: "and be gracious unto you" — Let him grant you grace in the eyes of men, as it is written (*Genesis* 39:21): "And He granted him grace in the eyes of the overseer of the prison" (*Ibid.*).¹⁴⁷

6:26 The L-rd lift His countenance unto you and grant you peace.

The L-rd lift His countenance unto you - R. Avira expounded: The ministering angels asked the Holy One Blessed be He: It is written in Your Torah (*Deuteronomy* 10:17): "who does not lift the countenance" [i.e., 'who does not forgive'] and who does not take a bribe," and it is written: "The L-rd lift his countenance unto you"! He answered: And how shall I not lift My countenance unto Israel, when I have prescribed for them in My Torah (*Ibid.* 8:10): "And you shall eat, and you shall be sated, and you shall bless," and they are circumspect in blessing even [when they have eaten only] up to the size of an olive and up to the size of an egg! (Berachoth 20b).148

The L-rd lift His countenance unto you - Bluria the proselyte asked R. Gamliel: It is written in your Torah (*Deuteronomy* 10:17): "who does not lift the countenance" [i.e., "who does not forgive"], and it is written: "The L-rd lift His countenance unto you"! R. Yossi the priest responded to her, saying: To what may this be compared? To one's granting a loan to another and setting a date for its repayment in the presence of the king, the borrower swearing to comply by the life of the king. The time for payment arriving, and the debt not being paid, the borrower comes to conciliate the king, who, thereupon says to him: I forgive you the slight to my honor; go and conciliate your friend! Here, too, [it is the same]. Here, in the transgressions between man and his

Maker, ["The L-rd lift His countenance unto you"]; there, in the transgressions between man and his neighbor, ["who does not lift the countenance"] (Rosh Hashanah 17b).¹⁴⁹

The L-rd lift His countenance unto you - The Scriptural priestly blessings are uttered, but not translated. Why so? For it is written therein: "The L-rd lift his countenance unto you" [which, in translation, might give the mistaken impression that G-d forgives all] (Megillah 25b). 150

The L-rd lift His countenance unto you - The men of Alexandria asked R. Yehoshua b. Chanania: One verse states (*Deuteronomy* 10:17): "who does not lift the countenance and who does not take a bribe," and another: "The L-rd lift His countenance unto you"! How is this to be reconciled? He answered: The latter [obtains] before the decree has been issued; the former, after it has been issued (*Niddah* 70b).¹⁵¹

The L-rd lift His countenance unto you - When? When you stand in prayer, as it is written [in respect to the prayer of Lot] (Genesis 19:21): "Behold, I have lifted your countenance." Now, if I have lifted the countenance for Lot, because of Abraham, My beloved, shall I not do so for you, and for the sake of your forefathers! (Sifrei). 152

and grant you peace - "peace" — This is the peace of Torah, as it is written (*Psalms* 29:11): "The L-rd gives strength [Torah] to His people; the L-rd blesses His people with peace" (*Ibid.*).¹⁵³

6:27 And they shall place My Name on the children of Israel, and I shall bless them.

And they shall place My Name - The Rabbis taught: "Thus shall you bless" — with the explicit Name [i.e., the Tetragammaton]. But perhaps only an epithet [is intended]? [This is not so, for] "And they shall place My Name" connotes the Name that is distinctive with Me. I might think that this obtains even in those places bordering [on Jerusalem]; it is, therefore, written: "And they shall place My Name," and, elsewhere (I Kings 11:36): "to place My Name there." Just as there, the Temple is referred to; here, too, the Temple [is indicated] (Sotah 38a). 154

And they shall place My Name - It was taught: R. Yehoshua b. Levi said: Whence is it derived that the Holy One Blessed be He longs for the priestly blessing? From: "And they shall place My Name on the children of Israel, and I shall bless them" (*Ibid.* b). 155

and I shall bless them - It was taught: Why was it seen fit to place "Repose peace" [Sim Shalom] after the priestly blessing [in the Amidah]? Because it is written: "And I shall bless them" — the blessing of the Holy One Blessed be He being peace, as it is written (Psalms 29:11): "The L-rd blesses His people with peace" (Megillah 18a). 156

and I shall bless them - It was taught: R. Yishmael says: We learned of a blessing for the Jews [i.e., the priestly blessing], but we did not learn of one for the priests themselves. "and I shall bless them," however, teaches us that the priests bless the Jews and the Holy One Blessed be He blesses the priests (Chullin 49a). 157

and I shall bless them - It was taught: R. Akiva says: We learned of a blessing for the Jews by the priests, but we did not learn of one by the Holy One Blessed be He Himself. "and I shall bless them," however, teaches us that the priests bless the Jews and the Holy One Blessed be He confirms their blessing (*Ibid.*).¹⁵⁸

and I shall bless them - It was taught: Whence is it derived that one should not say: This man [a priest] is [reputed to be] an adulterer and a murderer, and he blesses me! The Holy one Blessed be He says: Who blesses you? Is it not I who bless you? And thus is it written: "And I shall bless them" (Yerushalmi Gittin 5:8). 159

and I shall bless them - It was taught: Whence is it derived that the Jews should not say that their being blessed is dependent upon the priests, and that the priests should not say: It is we who bless the Jews? From: "and I shall bless them" (Sifrei). 160

7:1 And it was on the day that Moses had finished setting up the tabernacle and had anointed it and consecrated it, and all its vessels, and the altar and all its vessels, and had anointed them and consecrated them,

And it was on the day that Moses had finished setting up - It was taught: All the seven days of consecration, Moses would assemble and dismantle the tabernacle; and on the eighth day, he assembled it and did not dismantle it, as it is written: "And it was on the day that Moses finished setting up the tabernacle" — on the day that its assemblings came to an end (Yerushalmi Yoma 1:1).

and had anointed them and consecrated them - It was taught: All of the vessels made by Moses were consecrated by their anointment; thenceforward, it was their service itself which consecrated them, it being written: "and had anointed them and consecrated them" — They [became consecrated] through anointment, and not the vessels of future generations (Sanhedrin 16b).²

and had anointed them and consecrated them - It was taught: R. Yashiah says: Wet-measure vessels were anointed inside and outside, and dry-measure vessels, on the inside only, but not on the outside, it being written: "them" [i.e., the altar wet-measure) vessels] — to exclude [the anointment of] dry-measure vessels on the outside (Menachoth 57b).

7:9 And to the sons of Kehoth he did not give; for the service of the holy things upon them, on the shoulder they bore.

And to the sons of Kehoth he did not give, etc. - Rava expounded: Why was David punished through [the death of] Uzza? [Uzza dying when he put forth his hand to steady the ark being returned to Israel on a wagon by David's command (II Samuel 6)] Because David called words of Torah "songs," as it is written (Psalms 119:54): "Your statutes were songs to me," the Holy One Blessed be He said to him: I shall cause you to go astray in something that even the schoolchildren know, viz.: "And to the sons of Kehoth he did not give [wagons], for the service of the holy things upon them ..." — and he had the ark brought in a wagon! (Sotah 35a).^{4,5}

on the shoulder they bore - It was taught: If one carries [from one domain to another] on the Sabbath, whether in his right hand or his left hand, in his lap or on his shoulders, he is liable, such being the

"burden" of the children of Kehoth, as it is written: "on the shoulder they bore" (Rashi on Shabbath 92a).6

on the shoulder they bore - From "on the shoulder," do I not know that they bore? What, then, is the intent of "they bore" [yisau]? "Yisau" connotes singing, as it is written (Psalms 81:3): "Seu song" — whence the institution of Levitical singing is Scripturally derived (Erchin 11a).

7:10 And the princes brought offerings for the consecration of the altar on the day it was anointed; and the princes brought their offerings before the altar.

before the altar - What is the intent of: "before the altar"? They came and stood before the altar, Moses not accepting their offerings until the Holy One blessed be He had told him that they could sacrifice their offerings for the consecration of the altar (Sifrei).8

7:12 And the one who sacrificed his offering on the first day was Nachshon the son of Aminaday of the tribe of Judah.

on the first day. What is the intent of: "on the first day"? To teach that it was the first of all the days of the week (*Ibid.*).9

7:13 And his offering was one silver dish of one hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary. Both of them were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a meal-offering.

And his offering was one silver dish - Scripture hereby teaches us that they [the dishes] were dedicated towards the offerings at the outset (*Ibid.*).¹⁰

Both of them were full of fine flour - It was taught: Shmuel said: Even though it was taught that a vessel for liquids does not consecrate dry matter [placed therein, and vice versa], this applies to measuring vessels, but the bowls do consecrate [dry matter, though they are primarily for

liquids], it being written of them: "Both of them were full of fine flour" (Zevachim 88a)."

Both of them were full of fine flour - It was taught: "full" connotes "complete," whence it is derived that only whole amounts [i.e., a full log and a full issaron] are consecrated by the ministering vessels (Ibid.).¹²

Both of them were full of fine flour - [What is the intent of "Both"? To liken the dish to the bowl.] Just as the bowl was in the shekel of the sanctuary, so the dish (Sifrei).¹³

7:14 One spoon of ten shekels of gold, full of incense.

One spoon - The vessel combines all that is in it in respect to consecration [i.e., If one of the consecrated fruits contained in a vessel becomes unclean, they all become unclean.] Whence is this derived? R. Chanan said: From: "One spoon of ten shekels of gold, full of incense" — Scripture regards all that is in the spoon as one (Chagigah 23b).^{14,15}

One spoon of ten shekels of gold - How is this to be understood? The spoon was of gold and its weight of silver [i.e., "One spoon of ten shekels of silver in weight, (made) of gold"]; or, the spoon was of silver and its weight of gold [i.e., "One silver spoon of ten shekels of gold in weight"]? To this end it is written (86): "All the gold of the spoons was a hundred and twenty" [shekels of silver in weight] (Sifrei).16

full of incense - The Rabbis taught: The incense of the princes [offered up for an individual (as opposed to a collective offering] on the outer altar] was permitted only at that time, [such offering, thenceforward, being only on the golden altar] (Menachoth 50a).¹⁷

7:15 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering.

One young bullock, etc. - What is the intent of "one bullock" and "one ram"? "One bullock" — there being none like it in its flock; "one ram" — there being none like it in its flock (Sifrei). 18

7:18 On the second day, there sacrificed his offering, Nethanel the son of Tzuar, prince of Issachar.

there sacrificed his offering, Nethanel - What is the intent of: "there sacrificed" [as opposed to the usual order, viz.: "On this day, the prince, etc."]? Because [the tribe of] Reuven protested, claiming precedence in offering on the basis of [precedence in] birth, Moses chided them, saying: The Holy One Himself told me to sacrifice according to [the order of] the journeyings, as it is written (19): "He sacrificed his offering" — only he sacrificing, who was indicated to Moses by G-d Himself to offer the sacrifice (Ibid.). 19

prince of Issachar - Because Nethanel attained binah [higher understanding], it is reckoned by Scripture as if he had sacrificed first [this being the import of "sacrificed" before the name (see above)] (Ibid.).²⁰

7:78 On the day, the twelfth day, the prince of the children of Naftali, Achira the son of Einan.

On the day, the twelfth day - What is the intent of [the repetition of] "day," "day"? To teach that just as one day is consecutive, so the twelve days were consecutive [i.e., including the Sabbath] — whence it is derived that the [consecration of] the sanctuary overrides the Sabbath (Moed Katan 9a).²¹

7:89 And when Moses came to the tent of meeting to speak with Him, then he heard the Voice speaking with him from off the covering that was on the ark of Testimony, from between the two cherubs, speaking with him.

speaking with him [eilav] - [It is not written: "speaking to him" (lo), but: "speaking with him" (eilav)]. This teaches us that Moses heard, but all of Israel did not hear (Yoma 4b).²²

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8:2 Speak to Aaron and say to him: When you kindle the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light towards the body of the menorah.

towards the body of the menorah - This teaches us that they inclined towards the western lamp, and the western lamp, towards the Shechinah (Megillah 21b).¹

8:4 And this is the construction of the menorah: of beaten gold; from its shaft to its flowers, of beaten work.

According to the pattern that the L-rd showed Moses, so did he make the menorah.

And this is the construction of the menorah - It was taught in the school of R. Yishmael: The construction of the menorah posed difficulties to Moses, until the Holy One blessed be He pointed it out to him with "His finger," as it is written: "And this is the construction of the menorah" (Menachoth 29b).²

8:7 And thus shall you do to them to cleanse them: Sprinkle upon them the waters of purification, and they shall pass a blade over all their flesh, and they shall wash their clothes and make themselves clean.

and they shall pass a blade - It was taught: The Levites shave, and their shaving is a *mitzvah*, it being written: "and they shall pass a blade over all their flesh" (*Nazir* 40a).³

over all their flesh - except the hidden areas [i.e., the arm-pits and the genital region] (Pesikta Rabbathi).4

8:8 Then they shall take a young bullock with its mealoffering, fine flour mixed with oil, and a second young bullock shall you take for a sin-offering.

and a second young bullock - What is the intent of "a second"? If to teach that there were two, it is already written (12): "and make one a sin-offering, and one, a burnt-offering." But I might think that the sin-offering preceded the entire process of the burnt-offering; it is, therefore, written: "and a second young bullock shall you take for a sin-offering." And if [only] "a second young bullock" were written, I would think that the burnt-offering preceded the entire process of the sin-offering; it is, therefore, written: "and make one a sin-offering, and one, a burnt-offering." How is this to be reconciled? The [offering up of the] limbs of the burnt-offering precedes the limbs of the sin-offering because they are all consumed — whence it is derived that whatever is of greater sanctity than its neighbor precedes its neighbor (Zevachim 89b).

and a second young bullock, etc. - It was taught: R. Shimon says: What is the intent of "a second"? If to teach that there were two, it is already written (12): "and make one a sin-offering, and one, a burnt-offering." But I might think that the sin-offering was eaten by the Levites; it is, therefore, written: "and a second young bullock" — "second" to [i.e., of the same nature as] the burnt-offering, viz., just as the burnt-offering is not eaten, so, the sin-offering (Horiyoth 5b).6

8:17 For unto Me is every first-born among the children of Israel among man and beast. On the day that I smote every first-born in the land of Egypt I consecrated them to Me.

For unto Me is every first-born - From here it is derived that Israel [already] consecrated the first-born in the desert [i.e., even before entering Eretz Yisrael] (Bechoroth 4b).

For unto Me is every first-born - And it is written (Exodus 12:12): "And I will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt ... and against all the gods of Egypt I shall execute judgments" — whence it is derived that

even before the erection of the tabernacle, the sacred service was performed by the first-born (Yerushalmi Megillah 1:11).8

8:19 And I have given the Levites, given to Aaron and to his sons from the midst of the children of Israel to perform the service of the children of Israel in the tent of meeting and to atone for the children of Israel. And there shall be no plague among the children of Israel when the children of Israel draw near to the sanctuary.

And I have given the Levites, etc. - It was taught: R. Shimon b. Elazar says: [The presence of] priests, Levites, and Israelites [the owners of the sacrifice] are categorical requirements for the [acceptability of] the sacrifice. R. Tanchuma derived it from here: "And I have given the Levites, given to Aaron and to his sons from the midst of the children of Israel" — these are the Levites; "to perform the service of the children of Israel in the tent of meeting" — these are the priests; "And there shall be no plague among the children of Israel when the children of Israel draw near to the sanctuary" — these are the Israelites (Yerushalmi Pesachim 4:1).9-11

and to atone for the children of Israel - R. Elazar says: Whence is it derived that the [Levitical] singing is performed in the daytime? From: "And I have given the Levites, etc. and to atone for the children of Israel": Just as atonment [through the sacrifices] occurs in the daytime, so, the singing (Erchin 11a).¹²

and to atone for the children of Israel - It was taught: Whence is it derived that the [Levitical] singing is called "atonement"? From: "and to atone for the children of Israel" — This refers to the singing (Yerushalmi Pesachim 4:1).¹³

8:24 This, in respect to the Levites: From the age of twenty-five and above he shall come to do his task in the service of the tent of meeting.

This, in respect to the Levites - It was taught: I might think that just as Levites were rendered unfit [for the service] by years [i.e.,

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superannuation], so they were rendered unfit by blemishes; it is, therefore, written: "This, in respect to the Levites" — This [i.e., age, is a disqualifying factor] for Levites, and not the other [i.e., blemishes] (Chullin 24a).14

This, in respect to the Levites - It was taught: I might think that just as age [i.e., superannuation] is a disqualifying factor for Levites, so it is a disqualifying factor for priests; it is, therefore, written: "This, in respect to the Levites" - and not in respect to priests (Ibid.).15

from the age of twenty-five - I might think that [age was a factor] even in Shiloh and in the Temple; it is, therefore, written (4:47): "to perform the work of the service and the work of burden" [i.e., carrying the ark] — This applies only when there is bearing on the shoulder (*Ibid.*).¹⁶

from the age of twenty-five - See commentary on 4:3

8:25 And from the age of fifty, he shall return from the corps of the service, and he shall serve no more.

And from the age of fifty - It was taught: R. Abba said in the name of R. Levi: Channah, because she was profuse in prayer, shortened the life of Samuel. She said (I Samuel 1:22): "and he shall abide there [in the sanctuary] forever." Now is not the Levite's term of service only up to the age of fifty, as it is written: "And from the age of fifty, he shall return from the corps of the service"! This is the intent of (Proverbs 14:23): "In all pain there is profit; but the word of the lips is for loss alone" (Yerushalmi Berachoth 4:1).17

8:26 And he shall minister unto his brothers in the tent of meeting to keep the ordinance, but he shall not perform service. Thus shall you do to the Levites in their watches.

And he shall minister unto his brothers - It was taught: I might think, since it is written: "he shall return from the corps of the service," that all service is implied; it is, therefore, written: "And he shall minister unto his brothers in the tent of meeting." This teaches us that he returns to the keeping of the gates and to the service of the sons of Gershon [the loading of the wagons] (Sifrei).¹⁸

9:1 And the L-rd spoke to Moses in the desert of Sinai in the second year of their leaving the land of Egypt, in the first month, saying:

in the second year of their leaving, etc. -This teaches us that the years were numbered according to the exodus from Egypt (Yerushalmi Rosh Hashanah 1:1).

9:2 Let the children of Israel offer the Pesach in its appointed time.

Let the children of Israel - The Rabbis taught: Queries are made concerning the laws of Pesach, and the laws are expounded, thirty days before the festival; for Moses was speaking on the first Pesach [the fourteenth of Nissan] and exhorting them concerning the second Pesach [the fourteenth of Iyar], as it is written: "Let the children of Israel offer the Pesach in its appointed time," and (6): "And there were men who were unclean by [contact with] the body of a man" [on the first Pesach, in which instance they observe the second Pesach] (Pesachim 6b).²

in its appointed time - "in its appointed time" — and even on the Sabbath; "in its appointed time" — and even in a state of uncleanliness [i.e., If most of the populace were unclean, or if the sacerdotal vessels were unclean (by contact with a dead body), the offering is not postponed to the second Pesach, but the first Pesach is observed even in this state of uncleanliness] (*Ibid.* 77a).³

9:6 And there were men who were unclean by the body of a man, and they could not offer the Pesach on that day; and they approached Moses and Aaron on that day.

And there were men, etc. - Who were those men? They had become unclean by contact with a body with none to bury it [but themselves], the seventh [and final] day of their uncleanliness falling out on Pesach

eve, it being written: "and they could not offer the Pesach on that day," the implication being that they could offer it the next day (Succah 25b).4

9:10 Speak to the children of Israel, saying: A man, a man, if he become unclean by a body, or if he were on a distant way to you or to your generations, then let him offer the Pesach to the L-rd.

A man, a man, etc. - It was taught: "A man, a man, if he become unclean by a body ... then let him offer the Pesach to the L-rd in the second month" — a man[i.e., an individual] is subject to postponement until the second Pesach, but the populace is not subject to such postponement, observing the first Pesach [even] in a state of uncleanliness (Pesachim 66b).

A man, a man, etc. - It was taught: If Israel were half clean and half unclean, they are judged according to the majority, it being written: "A man, a man, if he become unclean by a body ... then let him offer the Pesach to the L-rd in the second month" — A man is subject to postponement until the second Pesach, but the populace is not subject to such postponement (Chullin 29a).6

if he become unclean by a body - R. Yehudah said in the name of Rav: The Pesach offering is not slaughtered and its blood not sprinkled for one who has become unclean by a creeping thing, it being written: "A man, a man, if he become unclean by a body." Are we not speaking of one whose seventh [and final] day of uncleanliness falls out on Pesach eve, in spite of which Scripture states that he must postpone [his offering until the second Pesach, (uncleanliness by a creeping thing, similarly, obtaining in the evening, as uncleanliness by a dead body on the seventh day)] (Pesachim 90b).

if he become unclean by a body - It was taught: I might think that the second Pesach were observed only by those unclean through a body or those who were "on a distant way." Whence do I derive [the same halachah] for those with the uncleanliness of zav [genital discharge], or leprosy, or cohabitation with a niddah? From: "A man, a man, if he become unclean" (Ibid. 93a).8

unclean by a body - It was taught: The Pesach offering which is brought in a state of uncleanliness is not to be eaten by those unclean through zav [a genital discharge], leprosy, menstruation, or childbirth. Why so? For Scripture states: "unclean by [contact with] a body" [and not by a bodily discharge] (Bechoroth 33a).9

unclean by a body, etc. - It was taught: If one unwittingly or by accident did not observe the first Pesach, he is to observe the second. If so, why is it written: "unclean by a body, or if he were in a distant way" [rather than, generically: "if he could not observe the first Pesach"]? For the former [those referred to by Scripture] are not liable to kareth [cutting-off, if they wilfully fail to observe the second Pesach, having been exempt from the first], whereas the latter are liable (Pesachim 92a).

unclean by a body, etc. - This tells me only of one who was unclean by a body [as observing the second Pesach]. Whence do I derive [as also observing the second Pesach] those who by accident or unwittingly [could not observe the first]? R. Yishmael taught: "unclean by a body" is not like "on a distant way"; and "on a distant way" is not like "unclean by a body." What is common to both is that if they could not observe the first Pesach they observe the second; I, likewise, include those who by accident or unwittingly did not observe the first, as observing the second (Yerushalmi Pesachim 9:1).11

or on a distant way - It was taught: R. Akiva said: It is written: "unclean" and it is written: "on a distant way." Just as one who is unclean, who is in a position to offer the Pesach through a messenger, does not do so [but waits until the second Pesach], so, one who is on a distant way, who could offer the Pesach through a messenger, does not do so — whence it is derived that if one slaughtered and sprinkled [the blood of] the offering on behalf on one "on a distant way," the offering is not acceptable (*Pesachim* 92b). 12

on a distant way. What is "a distant way"? From Modi'im [a distance of fifteen miles from Jerusalem] and beyond, along the entire circumference (*Ibid.* 93b).¹³

9:11 In the second month, on the fourteenth day, towards

evening, shall they offer it; with matzoth and bitter herbs shall they eat it.

In the second month - One who is unclean [on the first Pesach] does not send his offering through messenger, it being written: "A man, a man, if he become unclean ... then let him offer the Pesach ... in the second month" (Zevachim 22b).14

with matzoth, etc. - It was taught: It was said of Hillel that he would make a sandwich of matzoh ond *maror* [bitter herbs] and eat them together, as it is written: "with matzoth and *maror* shall they eat it." R. Yochanan said: His colleagues differed with him, as it was taught: "with matzoth and *maror* shall they eat it" — even each independently (*Pesachim* 115a). 15,16

with matzoth etc. - It was taught: Rava said: [The eating of] matzoh, nowadays, is a Scriptural ordinance, and [that of] maror, a Rabbinical one, it being written: "with matzoth and maror shall they eat it" [the Pesach offering] — When there is a Pesach offering [i.e., when there is a Temple], there is maror; when there is no Pesach offering, there is no maror. But Scripture repeats the injunction to eat matzoh, viz. (Exodus 12:18): "In the evening shall you eat matzoth" [thus making it mandatory even when there is no Temple] (Ibid. 120a].¹⁷

9:12 They shall not leave over of it until the morning, and a bone they shall not break in it; according to all the statute of the Pesach shall they offer it.

according to all the statute of the Pesach - The Rabbis taught: I might think that just as there is a prohibition against leaven being seen or found on the first Pesach, so there is such a prohibition on the second Pesach; it is, therefore, written: "with matzoth and bitter herbs shall they eat it" [followed by: "according to all the statute of the Pesach shall they offer it," implying exclusion from the general rule of something which partakes of the nature of the particular ("with matzoth and bitter herbs"), namely a positive commandment; in this instance, the commandment of removing leaven]. And this tells me only of a positive commandment [as being included in the general rule]. Whence do I derive [as similarly included] a negative commandment?

From: "They shall not leave over of it until the morning." And this tells me only of a negative commandment linked to a positive one. Whence do I derive an absolute [non-linked] negative commandment? From: "and a bone they shall not break in it." Just as the particular subsumes: a positive commandment, a negative commandment linked to a positive one, and an absolute negative commandment, so, the general rule [from which inclusions and exclusions are generated] subsumes these elements (*Ibid.* 95a). 18-20

according to all the statute of the Pesach, etc. - The Rabbis taught: "according to all the statute of the Pesach shall they offer it." Scripture here speaks of a mitzvah relating [directly] to the body [of the Pesach offering]. Whence do we derive [for inclusion in the general rule] mitzvoth with [i.e., accompanying] the body? From: "with matzoth and bitter herbs shall they eat it." I might think [that there is included] even mitzvoth which are not "with the body,"; it is, therefore, written: "and a bone they shall not break in it." Just as the breaking of a bone concerns a mitzvah in the body [of the offering], so all that concerns such a mitzvah [is included in the rule, to exclude that which is not of or "with" the body] (Ibid.) 21-23

shall they offer it - What is the intent of this? To teach that the Pesach is not slaughtered for one person [to eat], but the more the *mitzvah* can be enhanced [by a greater number of participants], the more it should be so enhanced (*Ibid.*).²⁴

9:13 And the man who is clean and was not on the way and who failed to offer the Pesach, that soul shall be cut off from his people; for the sacrifice of the L-rd he did not offer in its appointed time. That man shall bear his sin.

And the man - It was taught: I might think that only he who was clean or who was not on a distant way is liable to *kareth* [cutting-off]. Whence do I derive [such liability] for one who was uncircumcised, or unclean by a creeping thing, or in one of the other states of uncleanliness? From: "And the man" (*Ibid.* 69b).²⁵

And the man - It was taught: Whence is it derived that if one wilfully failed to bring the offering on the first Pesach, he does so on the second?

R. Zeira said: "And the man" — to include the wilfull transgressor (Pesachim 9:1),26

and was not on the way - The Rabbis taught: If he were standing outside of Modi'im [see commentary (13)] and could enter [in time for the offering] by having recourse to horses or mules, I might think he were obligated to do so; it is, therefore, written: "and was not on the way" — and this one was "on the way" (Pesachim 94a).²⁷

and was not on the way - The Rabbis taught: If he were standing before Modi'im and could not enter because of camels and wagons blocking his way, I might think he were not obligated [to leave his family and his belongings and enter alone]; it is, therefore, written: "and was not on the way" — and this one was "not on the way" (*Ibid.*).²⁸

and was not on the way - It was taught: If he were outside of Modi'im, leading his horse, I might think he were obligated [to mount it and ride in for the offering]; it is, therefore, written: "and was not on the way" — to exclude this one, who was "on the way" (Yerushalmi Pesachim 1:2).29

and who failed - It was taught: If he were standing before Modi'im and his legs were bad, I might think he were [notwithstanding] obligated; it is, therefore, written: "and who failed" — to exclude this one, who did not fail [wilfully, but simply could not] (Ibid.).³⁰

and who failed to offer - It was taught: If he were standing before Modi'im before the sixth hour [the time for the offering] and he went out [i.e., into Modi'im and beyond] before the sixth hour, I might think that he were liable [for kareth]; it is, therefore, written: "and who failed to offer": One who fails at the time of the offering is liable; one who fails, not at the time of the offering, is not liable (Ibid.).31

that soul shall be cut off - It was taught: R. Yossi says: The offering is slaughtered [even] for a woman alone, even on the second Pesach, it being written: "that soul shall be cut off" — a soul, even a woman (Pesachim 91b).³²

that soul shall be cut off - It was taught: Rebbi says: There is kareth liability for the first [Pesach, if one wilfully does not bring the offering

thereon] and there is kareth liability for the second, it being written: "And the man who is clean and was not on the way and who failed to offer the Pesach, that soul shall be cut off" — This refers to failure to bring it on the first Pesach; "or if the sacrifice of the L-rd he did not offer in its appointed time" — this refers to [failure to bring it on] the second Pesach; "he shall bear his sin." Whence is it derived that "he shall bear his sin" refers to kareth? From [the kareth indication in respect to] one who blasphemes the Name, concerning whom it is written (Leviticus 24:15): "and he shall bear his sin" (Ibid. 93a). 33,34

That man - What is the intent of "That man"? To exclude a minor from kareth (Ibid. 91b).35

9:14 And if there live a sojourner among you, then he shall offer the Pesach to the L-rd. According to the statute of the Pesach and according to its law, thus shall he do. One statute shall there be for you, both for the sojourner and the native of the land.

And if there live, etc. - I might think that he brings the Pesach offering on the day of his conversion; it is, therefore, written: "as the native," viz.: Just as the native brings it on the fourteenth, so the convert (Sifrei).³⁶

9:15 And on the day that the tabernacle was erected, the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the testimony; and in the evening there was on the tabernacle as the appearance of fire until morning.

And on the day that the tabernacle was erected - Abbaye said: Whence is it derived that there is no Temple construction at night? From: "And on the day that the tabernacle was erected." It is erected in the daytime, and not at night (Shevuoth 15b).³⁷

9:23 At the word of the L-rd they encamped, and at the word of the L-rd they journeyed. The charge of the L-rd they

kept, at the word of the L-rd by the hand of Moses.

At the word of the L-rd they encamped - Ulla said: R. Yossi holds that dismantling in order to rebuild in the same place is [the forbidden Sabbath labor of] "dismantling." Dismantling in order to rebuild in a different place is not "dismantling." Rabbah thereupon said to him: Let us analyze this. All of the forbidden Sabbath labors are derived from [the labors performed in] the tabernacle; and there, the dismantling was for the purpose of rebuilding elsewhere! He answered: That case is different. Since it is written: "At the word of the L-rd they encamped," it is comparable to dismantling for the purpose of rebuilding in the same place [for G-d could command them to return and rebuild it there] (Shabbath 31b).³⁸⁻⁴⁰

At the word of the L-rd they encamped - R. Huna said: For those who dwell in tents, the [two thousand ell] Sabbath bound is measured from the door of their abodes [and not from the city gate, as it is for those who dwell in permanent dwellings]. Whereupon R. Chisda asked: It is written (33:49): "And they encamped by the Jordan from Beth Hayeshimoth," concerning which Rabbah bar Bar Channa said: I saw that place, and it was three parasangs by three parasangs. And it was taught: When they had to evacuate [i.e., to move their bowels], they did so not in front [of the camp] and not on the side [because of the possibility that the cloud and the ark might come there], but behind it. We see, then, that though they dwelt in tents they traversed the entire distance of the camp!] Rava answered: Are you asking about the [tribal] flags [encampment] of the desert? The desert flags are entirely different. Since it is written: "At the word of the L-rd they encamped, and at the word of the L-rd they journeyed," it is as if they dwelt in permanent dwellings (Eruvin 55b).41-43

10:2 Make for yourself two trumpets of silver; of beaten work shall you make them. And they shall be to you for calling the assembly and for the journeyings of the camps.

Make for yourself - It was taught: R. Yashiyah says: "Make for yourself" — of your own. R. Yonathan says: Of the congregation. Why,

then, is it written: "for yourself"? As if to say: I desire yours [i.e., Moses'] more than I do theirs (Yoma 3b).

Make for yourself - All the implements fashioned by Moses were fit [ritually] for use by him and by future generations. The trumpets, however, were fit for him, but not for future generations. Why so? For it is written: "Make for youself" — for yourself, but not for future generations. In that case, why do we not say (Deuteronomy 10:1): "And you shall make for yourself an ark" — for yourself, but not future generations? It is different here, for it is written twice: "for yourself" [i.e., "Make for yourself," and "they shall be to you"] (Menachoth 28b).²

trumpets of silver. The mouth of the shofar used for proclaiming fasts was coated with silver. And why does it differ from the shofar of Rosh Hashanah, which was coated with gold? Because all [shofars used for gathering] assemblies are of silver, as it is written [in this respect]: "Make for yourself two trumpets of silver" (Rosh Hashanah 27a).

trumpets of silver - It was taught: Trumpets made of pieces [of silver] are [ritually] fit. Those made of metals [other than siver] are not fit. Now why is the latter true? For it is written: "of silver ... and they shall be." But in respect to pieces, is it not also written: "of beaten work [implying all of one piece] ... and they shall be"? Scripture stipulates an exclusion in respect to the menorah (8:4): "It shall be of beaten work" — "It," and not the trumpets (Menachoth 28a).4

10:5 And you shall sound a blast, and the camps that lie on the east shall move forward.

And you shall sound a blast [Utekatem teruah] - It was taught: A tekiah [a long, sustained sound] by itself, and a teruah [a rapid succession of three notes, tremolo] by itself. But perhaps [in this context] tekiah and teruah are one and the same? [This cannot be, for] (7): "And when the people are to be gathered, you shall sound a tekiah and not a teruah" indicates that tekiah and teruah are distinct sounds (Rosh Hashanah 34a).5

And you shall sound a blast [Utekatem teruah] - It was taught:

Whence is it derived that a sustained tekiah is sounded before the teruah? From: "Utekatem teruah." And whence is it derived that a sustained tekiah follows it? From (6): "teruah yitkeu" (Ibid.).6

10:6 And you shall sound a *teruah*, second, and the camps that lie on the south shall move forward; a *teruah* shall they sound for their journeyings.

And you shall sound a teruah, second - It was taught: R. Yishmael, the son of R. Yochanan b. Beroka says: What is the intent of "second"? It is intended to serve as a prototype, viz.: Wherever "teruah" is indicated, tekiah is to be second to it [i.e., to follow it] (Ibid.).

10:10 And on the day of your rejoicing and on your appointed times, and on your new moons, you shall sound the trumpets over your burnt-offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings, and they shall be to you as a memorial before your G-d; I am the L-rd, your G-d.

And on the day of your rejoicing, etc. - It was taught: "And on the day of your rejoicing" — the Sabbaths; "and on your appointed times" — the three festivals; "and on your new moons" — as implied (Sifrei).8

And on your new moons - It was taught: I might think that just as the trumpet is sounded over [the mussaf offering of] Sabbath itself and over [that of] the new moon itself, so, it is sounded for each mussaf offering individually [if the new moon falls out on the Sabbath]; it is, therefore, written: "and on your new moons" — All months are likened to one another [there being only one mussaf sounding regardless of when the new moon falls out] (Succah 55a).9

over your burnt-offerings, etc. - "over your burnt-offering and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings" — The sacrifices of peace-offerings are being likened to burnt-offerings, viz.: Just as burnt-offerings are slaughtered on the north [of the altar], so, peace-offerings (Zevachim 58a).¹⁰

over your burnt-offerings, etc. - "over your burnt-offerings and over

the sacrifices of your peace-offerings" — Peace-offerings are being likened to burnt-offerings, and, burnt-offerings, to peace-offerings in respect to [the requirement of Levitical] singing. Just as a burnt-offering is holy of holies, so, [only] a peace-offering which is holy of holies [requires singing]; and just as peace-offerings have a set time, so, [only] a burnt-offering which has a set time [requires singing] — whence it is derived that a burnt-offering which is a gift of the congregation [and which does not have a set time] does not require singing (*Erchin* 11b).11

and they shall be to you as a memorial - It was taught: Whence is it derived that "malchuyoth" ["homage to the King"] is recited on Rosh Hashanah? R. Yossi b. R. Yehudah said: From: "and they shall be to you as a memorial before your G-d; I am the L-rd, your G-d." What is the intent of: "I am the L-rd, your G-d"? It is intended as a prototype, viz.: wherever "zichronoth" ["memorials"] are recited [as they are on Rosh Hashanah, of which it is written: "zichron teruah"], malchuyoth are to be recited along with them (Rosh Hashanah 32a). 12

10:21 And the Kehothi journeyed, the bearers of the holy things, and they set up the tabernacle for their arrival.

And the Kehothi journeyed, the bearers of the holy things - "And the Kehothi journeyed" — two; "the bearers of the holy things" — two. This teaches us that there were four carriers of the poles with the ark (Menachoth 94b).¹³

And the Kehothi journeyed, the bearers of the holy things -It was taught: Who pointed out directions [i.e., north, south, etc.] in the desert? R. Acha said: The ark did so [the western side of the ark positioning itself due west], as it is written: "And the Kehothi journeyed, the bearers of the holy things" — this refers to the ark. And the sons of Merari set up the tabernacle in advance of the arrival of the sons of Kehoth, who bore the ark (Yerushalmi Eruvin, 5:1). 14-16

10:25 And there went forward the flag of the camp of the children of Dan, the rearward of all the camps according

to their hosts; and over its host, Achiezer the son of Amishadai.

the rearward of all the camps - Why was the tribe of Dan the rearward of all the camps? Because it was the most populous. It, therefore, journeyed last, so that if someone [in advance] had lost something, they could return it to him [their greater numbers making it more likely for them to find it] (*Ibid.*).¹⁷

10:29 And Moses said to Chovav the son of Reuel the Midianite, the father-in-law of Moses: We are journeying to the place of which the L-rd said: It, shall I give to you. Go with us, and we shall do good unto you, for the L-rd has spoken good for Israel.

to Chovav the son of Reuel - Now was "Chovav" his name? Was not "Reuel" his name, as it is written [of the daughters of Jethro] (*Exodus* 2:18): "And they came to Reuel, their father"? From here we learn that young children are wont to call their grandfather "father" (*Sifrei*). 18

It, shall I give to you - "to you," proselytes having no portion in it. How, then, are we to understand (*Ezekiel* 47:23): "And it shall be, that in whatever tribe the stranger may sojourn, there, shall you give him his inheritance"? If it cannot refer to inheritance per se, understand it as referring to burial, proselytes being granted burial in Eretz Yisrael (*Ibid.*).¹⁹

Go with us and we shall do good unto you - It was taught: The sons of Keini, the father-in-law of Moses, bring first-fruits and recite [the invocation thereon], it being written: "And Moses said to Chovav the son of Reuel: "Go with us and we shall do good unto you" [the "good" being a gift of land, which entailed the bringing of first-fruits] (Yerushalmi Bikkurim 1:4).²⁰

10:33 And they journeyed from the mountain of the L-rd, a distance of three days. And the ark of the covenant of the

L-rd traveled before them a distance of three days to prepare a resting place for them.

And they journeyed from the mountain of the L-rd - What is signified by "the mountain of the L-rd"? R. Chamma b. R. Chanina said: "the mountain on which they strayed from the L-rd" (Shabbath 116a).²¹

10:35 And it was, when the ark traveled, that Moses said: Arise, O L-rd, and let your enemies be scattered, and let Your foes flee before You.

And it was, when the ark traveled - The Rabbis said: The Holy One Blessed be He made signs for this section [an inverted letter "nun"] above and below. Why so? Because it is of such significance as to be regarded as a book in itself (*Ibid.*).²²

And it was, when the ark traveled - It was taught: A Torah parchment on which is written eighty-five letters, as in the section "And it was when the ark traveled," renders one's hands ritually unclean [a precautionary measure for the safe-guarding of Torah scrolls] (Yadayim 3:5).²³

that Moses said: Arise, O L-rd, and let Your enemies be scattered - And what did Israel say? R. Yitzchak said: "Rejoice, rejoice, O ark! — you who are clasped in embroidery of gold; you who are exalted in the sanctuary of the palace [i.e., the Temple]; you who are extolled in vestments of glory!" (Avodah Zarah 24b).²⁴

10:36 And when it rested, he said: Return, O L-rd, to the ten thousands thousands of Israel.

the ten thousands thousands of Israel - The Rabbis taught: "And when it rested, he said: Return, O L-rd, to the ten thousands thousands of Israel" — This teaches us that the Shechinah does not rest upon fewer than two thousand and two ten thousands of Israel. So that if Israel were two thousand and two ten thousands less one, it would emerge that one who did not fulfill the command to be fruitful and multiply caused the Shechinah to depart from Israel (Yevamoth 64a).²⁵

the ten thousands thousands of Israel - R. Dostai expounded: "And when it rested, he said": — This teaches us that the Shechinah does not rest upon fewer than two thousand and two ten thousands of Israel. So that if Israel were two thousand and two ten thousands less one, and there were a pregnant woman among them, who could complete the number, and a dog barked at her and caused her to miscarry — it would emerge that this one [the owner of the dog] had caused the Shechinah to depart from Israel — whence it was ruled: One may not keep a dog unless it is chained (Bava Kamma 83b).²⁶

11:2 And the people cried unto Moses, and Moses prayed to the L-rd, and the fire subsided.

and Moses prayed to the L-rd - It was taught: R. Elazar said: Moses "flung words on High," as it is written: "And Moses prayed to the L-rd": Do not read it "to" [el] the L-rd," but: "against [al] the L-rd," the school of R. Eliezer b. Yaakov construing aleph [el (written with an aleph)] as ayin [as in al (written with an ayin)] and ayin as aleph (Berachoth 32a).

11:4 And the mixed multitude among them desired lust, and the children of Israel, too, turned and cried, saying: Who shall feed us meat!

And the mixed multitude - It was taught: R. Yehudah said: This is one of the ten trials wherewith our forefathers tried the L-rd in the desert (Erchin 15b).²

11:5 We remembered the fish which we would eat in Egypt, free, the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic.

We remembered the fish - Rav and Shmuel differ on this, one saying "fish," literally; the other, illicit relations. The first bases himself on "which we would eat"; the second, on "free" (Yoma 75a).³

the cucumbers [kishuim] - Why are they called "kishuim"? Because

they are as hard [kasheh, i.e., harmful] to the body as swords (Berachoth 57a).4

the cucumbers, etc. - R. Ammi and R. Assi differ on this, one saying that they tasted all flavors in the *manna* except the flavor of these five; the other saying that they experienced both the flavor and the substance of all the others, but only the *flavor* of these five (*Yoma 75a*).⁵

11:6 And now, our souls are dry; there is nothing. Only to the manna is our eyes.

our souls are dry; there is nothing - What is the intent of: "there is nothing"? They said that the *manna* would burst their bowels. Could mortal ingest and not expel [as was the case with the *manna*]! (Yoma 75b).6

11:8 And the people would sally forth and gather it and grind it in a mill or beat it in a mortar, and they would cook it in a pot and make cakes of it; and its flavor was as the taste of oil cakes.

as the taste of oil cakes [leshad hashamen] - What is signified by "leshad"? R. Avahu said: Just as a suckling infant finds the flavors of all that his mother has eaten in her breast [shad], so, the Jews, all the time they were eating the manna, they found in it a wealth of flavors. Others say: "leshad," literally. Just as a shed [i.e., a demon,] assumes a variety of forms, so the manna assumed a variety of flavors (Ibid. a).

11:10 And Moses heard the people crying over its families, each man at the door of his tent, and the L-rd waxed exceedingly angry, and in the eyes of Moses it was evil.

crying over its families - Over the matters [i.e., the interdict of illicit relations] affecting its families (Shabbath 130a).8

11:12 Did I conceive all this people? Did I beget them, that You

say to me: Bear them in your bosom, as a nurse bears a nursling, to the land which You promised to their fathers?

as a nurse bears a nursling - It was taught: R. Simlai said: The judge is exhorted to be forbearing with the people. To what extent? R. Channa (Others say R. Shabtai) answered: "as a nurse bears a nursling" (Sanhedrin 8a).9

11:16 And the L-rd said to Moses: Gather unto Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of Israel and its officers, and take them to the tent of meeting, and let them stand there with you.

Gather unto Me seventy men - It was taught: The Great Sanhedrin was composed of seventy men," it being written: "Gather unto Me seventy men," and Moses over them. Whence is it derived that Moses was over them? From: "and let them stand there with you" — you among them (Ibid. 2a,16b).10

Gather unto Me seventy men - It was taught: (Koheleth 12:11): "The words of the sages are like spurs, and like nails planted, the men of the gatherings": "the gatherings" are the Sanhedrin, as it written: "Gather unto Me seventy men of the elders of Israel" (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 10:1).11

of the elders of Israel - R. Chamma b. Chanina said: From the earliest days of our forefathers, veshivah [i.e., learning] never left them. They were in the desert, and yeshivah was with them, as it is written: "gather unto Me seventy men of the elders of Israel" (Yoma 28b).12

of the elders of Israel - It was taught: "Elder" signifies "sage," as it is written: "Gather unto Me seventy men of the elders of Israel" [to serve as the Sanhedrin] (Kiddushin 32b).13

of the elders of Israel - From here it is derived that the Holy One Blessed be He confers honor upon the elders (Sifrei).14

and let them stand there with you - What is the intent of "with you"? Similar to you. Just as you are neither proselyte, nor Nathin [of defective lineage], nor bastard, they, too, may not be of these types (Yerushalmi Horiyoth 1:4).¹⁵

11:20 Until a month of days, until it comes out of your nostrils, and it will be loathsome to you, because you have despised the L-rd who is in your midst, and you have cried before Him, saying Why did we go out of Egypt?

Until a month of days - And further (33) it is written: "The flesh was still between their teeth" [when they died]! How is this to be reconciled? The mediocre ones died immediately; the wicked ones were in agony for a month (Yoma 75b).16

Until a month of days - It was taught: Whence is it derived that hours are not reckoned unto months [so as to establish a month as twenty-nine days, twelve hours, etc.]? From: "Until a month of days" — Days are reckoned unto months, and hours are not reckoned unto months (Megillah 5a).¹⁷

Until a month of days - From here it is derived that the period of ostracism is not less than thirty days (Yerushalmi Moed Katan 3:1).¹⁸

11:21 And Moses said: Six hundred thousand foot are the people in whose midst I am, and You say meat shall I give to them that they eat a month of days!

Six hundred thousand foot [ragli] - Moses hereby said to Israel: "Because of me" [ragli] you were all saved from Pharaoh's decree (Sotah 12b).¹⁹

11:22 If the sheep and cattle are slaughtered for them, shall it be found for them! If all the fish of the sea are gathered for them, shall it be found for them!

If all the fish of the sea are gathered for them - From here it is derived that fish are not slaughtered, but gathering alone is sufficient [for eating them] (Chullin 27b).²⁰

11:26 And two men remained in the camp. The name of the one was Eldad; and the name of the other, Medad. And the spirit came to rest upon them. And they were in the wiritings; and they did not go out to the tent, but they prophesied in the camp.

but they prophesied in the camp - What did they prophesy? They said: Moses shall die and Joshua shall bring the Jews to the land. R. Channa said in the name of R. Elazar: They prophesied concerning the quail: "Arise, quail!" R. Nachman said: They prophesied concerning Gog and Magog (Sanhedrin 17a).^{21,22}

11:27 And the youth ran and told Moses, saying: Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.

are prophesying in the camp - It was taught: When the Holy One blessed be He said to Moses: "Gather unto Me seventy men," Eldad and Medad said: "We are not worthy of that distinction," whereupon the Holy One Blessed be He said: "Since you diminished yourselves, I shall add greatness to your greatness." And which greatness did He add to them? All of the prophets prophesied and ceased; they prophesied, and did not cease. Whence is this derived? Here, [in respect to the others] it is written (25): "and they prophesied, and did not continue"; there, [in respect to Eldad and Medad] it is written: "prophesying" — prophesying without ceasing (Ibid.).²³

11:28 And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses from his youth, answered and said: My lord, Moses, confine them!

My lord, Moses, confine them - R. Levi said: If one utters a word [i.e., if he renders a decision] in the presence of his master, he goes to his grave without a child, as it is written: "And Joshua answered ... and said: My lord, Moses, confine them!" and it is written (I Chronicles 7:27): "Nun, his son; Joshua, his son" [the line ending there] (Eruvin 63b).²⁴

My lord, Moses, confine them - Why so? For it is a breach of derech

eretz [proper conduct], being comparable to a student's rendering a decision in the presence of his master (Sanhedrin 17a).²⁵

confine them - What is the intent of "confine them"? Saddle them with community service and they shall leave off [prophesying] of themselves (*Ibid.*).²⁶

11:32 And the people stood up all of that day and all of the night and all of the next day, and they gathered the quail. He who gathered least gathered ten *chomer*. And they spread it for themselves in layers about the camp.

the quail - It is written [shelav] and pronounced [selav]. R. Chanina said: The righteous ate it in contentment [shalvah]; to the wicked it was like thorns [silvin] (Yoma 75b).²⁷

And they spread it [vayishtechu] for themselves in layers [shatoach] - Resh Lakish said: Do not read it: "vayishtechu" but "vayishchetu" ["and they slaughtered"], whereby we are taught that "the enemies of the Jews" [a euphemism for "the Jews"] deserved to be slaughtered. What is the intent of "shatoach"? It came down for them in layers (Ibid.).²⁸

11:33 The flesh was still between their teeth, not yet torn, and the L-rd vented His wrath on the people. And the L-rd smote the people with a very great plague.

The flesh was still between their teeth - R. Chisda said: If one ate meat, he may not eat cheese. R. Acha b. R. Yosef asked R. Chisda: What is the *halachah* with respect to flesh between the teeth? He answered: "The *flesh* was still between their teeth" [i.e., even when between the teeth, it is still called "flesh"] (Chullin 105a).²⁹

12:1 And Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses concerning the woman, Kushite, that he had taken, for he had taken a Kushite woman.

the woman, Kushite - Now was "Kushite" her name? Was her name not "Tzipporah"? The intent is, rather, that just as a Kushite [i.e., an Ethiopian] is unique in her skin, so was Tzipporah unique in her deeds (Moed Katan 16b).

12:3 And the man, Moses, was exceedingly humble, more than any other man on the face of the earth.

And the man, Moses, was exceedingly humble - R. Yochanan said: The Holy One Blessed be He reposes His Shechinah only on one who is strong, rich, wise, and humble. And all are derived from Moses: "humble" — as it is written: "And the man, Moses, was exceedingly humble" (Nedarim 38a).²

12:4 And the L-rd said suddenly to Moses and to Aaron and to Miriam: Go out, the three of you, to the tent of meeting.

And the three of them went out.

And the L-rd said suddenly - From here it is derived that "suddenly" connotes constraint (Krituth 9a).

12:6 And he said: Hear, now, my words. If there be among you prophets, I, the L-rd make Myself known to him in a vision: in a dream I speak to him.

in a dream I speak to him - Shmuel, when he had a bad dream, would say (Zechariah 10:2): "and the dreams speak vanity." And when he had a good dream, he would say: Now, do dreams speak vanity? Is it not written: "in a dream I speak to him"? (Berachoth 55b).4

in a dream I speak to him - Rava asked: [In one place] it is written: "in a dream I speak to him," and, in another (*Zechariah* 10:2): "and the dreams speak vanity"! There is no contradiction. The first is through an angel; the second, through a demon (*Ibid.*).

12:8 Mouth to mouth do I speak to him; in plain sight, and not

in riddles. And the configuration of the L-rd does he see. Why, then, did you not fear to speak against My servant, Moses?

Mouth to mouth, etc. - It was taught: Moses separated from his wife, and the Holy One Blessed be He concurred. Where do we find His concurrence? In: "Mouth to mouth do I speak with him" [this constituting a rationale for Moses' separation] (Shabbath 87a).6

And the configuration of the L-rd does he see - It was taught: R. Shmuel b. Nachmani said in the name of R. Yonathan: As a reward for (*Exodus* 3:6): "for he was afraid to look upon G-d," he merited: "And the configuration of the L-rd does he see" (*Berachoth* 7a).

12:9 And the anger of the L-rd burned against them, and He departed.

And the anger of the L-rd burned against them - This teaches us that Aaron, too, became leprous (Shabbath 97a).8

12:10 And the cloud moved from off the tent, and, behold, Miriam was as leprous as snow; and Aaron turned to Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.

and Aaron turned - What is the intent of: "and he turned"? He turned from his leprosy [i.e., He also was stricken, and he was healed] (Shabbath 98a).

12:11 And Aaron said to Moses: Pray, do not impute sin to us in that we have been foolish and we have sinned.

in that we have been foolish - R. Yossi b. R. Chanina said (*Jeremiah* 50:36): "A sword upon the *badim venoalu*" — a sword upon "the enemies of Torah scholars" [a euphemism for "torah scholars"] who sit *bad bevad* [by themselves] and study Torah [without the other]. What is more, their minds become stultified, it being written here: "*venoalu*," and, elsewhere: "asher noalnu" ["in that we have been foolish"]. And,

what is more, they sin, as it is written: "and we have sinned" (Berachoth 63b).10

12:12 Let her not be as a dead one, which, in leaving its mother's womb, has half its flesh consumed.

Let her not be as a dead one - From here it is derived that a leper is regarded as one who is dead (*Nedarim* 64b).¹¹

Let her not be as a dead one - It was taught: Whence is it Scripturally derived that the mourning period is seven days? R. Avahu said in the name of R. Yochanan: [It is derived from] "Let her not be as a dead one ... she shall be closed up" — Just as the days of [mourning for] a dead one are seven, so the days of "closing up" [for a leper] are seven (Yerushalmi Moed Katan 3:5).¹²

12:13 And Moses cried out to the L-rd, saying: "L-rd, I pray you; heal her, I pray You."

L-rd, I pray You - The Rabbis taught: A certain student once officiated at prayers very tersely, in the presence of R. Elazar, whereupon his disciples said to him: "How terse he is being!" He replied: Is he being any more terse than Moses our teacher who prayed: "L-rd, I pray You; heal her, I pray You"! (Berachoth 34a).¹³

heal her, I pray You - R. Yaakov said in the name of R. Chisda: One who implores mercy for his friend need not mention his name, as it is written: "L-rd, I pray You; heal her, I pray You," Miriam not being mentioned by name (*Ibid.*).¹⁴

12:14 And the L-rd said to Moses: And if her father had spat in her face, would she not be humiliated for seven days! Let her be closed up for seven days outside of the camp, and then she shall be gathered in.

And if her father had spat, etc. - It was taught: Whence is the a fortiori argument Scripturally derived? From: "And the L-rd said to Moses:

And if her father had spat in her face, would she not be humiliated for seven days! The period, then, vis à vis the Shechinah should be fourteen days! But here [we are taught that] what is inferred a fortiori has the same power as the source of the inference (Bava Kamma 25a).¹⁵

would she not be humiliated for seven days - The Rabbis taught: There is no nezifah [rebuke] period for less than seven days. And though there is no proof for this, it is intimated in: "And if her father had spat in her face, would she not be humiliated for seven days!" (Moed Katan 16a).¹⁶

and then she shall be gathered in - It was taught: R. Yitzchak said: Scribal grace words are a "halachah to Moses upon Sinai." What are scribal grace words? [For example,] "and then she shall be gathered in" ["and then" being superfluous contextually and included only for stylistic grace] (Nedarim 37b).¹⁷

12:15 And Miriam was closed up outside of the camp for seven days, and the people did not journey until Miriam had been gathered in.

and the people did not journey, etc. - "As one metes it out, so is it meted out to him." Miriam waited for Moses, as it is written (Exodus 2:4): "And his sister stood from afar," and Israel waited for her in the desert, as it is written: "and the people did not journey until Miriam had been gathered in." And the recompense is even greater; for she waited only one hour, whereas Israel waited for her seven days (Sotah 9b, 11a).18

Shelach

13:2 Send for yourself men, and let them spy out the land of Canaan that I am giving to the children of Israel, one man, one man, according to the tribe of his fathers shall you send, each leader among them.

Send for yourself - It was taught: Resh Lakish said: "Send for youself" — of your own volition, as it is written (*Deuteronomy* 1:22): "And you all drew near to me and said: Let us send men before us and let them search out the land for us ... and the thing was good in my eyes" — in my eyes, but not in the eyes of the Holy One Blessed be He (*Sotah* 34b).^{1,2}

one man, one man - According to R. Akiva, who holds that additional words indicate additional numbers, there were twenty-four [i.e., two from each tribe]. According to R. Yishmael who holds that additional words are merely doublings [i.e., conventional expressions], there were twelve (Yerushalmi Sotah 7:5).³

13:13 For the tribe of Asher, Setur the son of Michael.

Setur the son of Michael - It was taught: R. Yitzchak said: This is a tradition that we have received from our fathers: The spies were named according to their deeds; and we are apprised of only one — Setur the son of Michael: "Setur" — he denigrated [satar - "tore down"] the works of the Holy One Blessed be He; "Michael" — he "weakened" [mach] the Holy One Blessed be He [Kel - i.e., the effect of his report was to weaken the consciousness of G-d's strength]. R. Yochanan said: We can include Nachbi the son of Vafsi. "Nachbi" — he "hid" [hechbi] the powers of the Holy One Blessed be He; "Vafsi" — he "skipped over" [pasa] the attributes of the Holy One Blessed be He (Sotah 34b).4.5

13:16 These are the names of the men that Moses sent to spy out the land; and Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun "Yehoshua."

And Moses called Hoshea ... "Yehoshua" - He said: "May the L-rd ["Kah"] protect you [yoshiacha] from the counsel of the spies (Ibid.).6

And Moses called Hoshea ... "Yehoshua" - R. Hoshea taught: The Yod that was taken from our mother Sarah [she was originally called "Sarai] arose and prostrated himself before the Holy One Blessed be He, saying: L-rd of the Universe, You have uprooted me from this pious woman! The Holy One Blessed be He replied: You may go. In the past you were in the name of a woman and at the end of a word. Upon your life, I shall place you in the name of a man, at the beginning of a word. And thus it is written: "and Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun "Yehoshua" (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 2:6)."

13:20 And what is the land? Is it fat or lean? Does it have a tree or not? And strengthen yourselves and take from the fruits of the land; and the days were the days of the first-ripe grapes.

Does it have a tree - Rava said: Iyyov lived in the days of the spies, it being written here (Job 1:1): "There was a man in the land of Utz," and, elsewhere: "Does it have a tree [etz]?" And though it is written here "Utz," and there "etz," this is what Moses was saying to Israel: Does it possess that man whose years are as those of a tree and who shields his generation like a tree? (Bava Bathra 15a).8

13:22 And they went up in the south and he came until Chevron. And there, were Achiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of the giant. And Chevron had been built seven years before Tzoan of Egypt.

And they went up in the south and he came - Should it not be: "and they came"? Rava said: This teaches us that Calev removed himself from the counsel of the spies and went and prostrated himself at the

graves of his forefathers, praying that he be saved from the counsel of the spies. And this is the intent of (14:24): "And My servant Calev, since there was a different spirit with him ..." (Sotah 34b).9

And there, were Achiman, etc. - It was taught: "Achiman" — the most able [meyuman] of the brothers [achim]; "Sheshai" — he rendered the land waste [mashim (with his great strength)]; "Talmai" — he heaped up the land, furrow [telem] upon furrow. Another view: "Achiman" — he built Anath; "Sheshai" — he built Elash; "Talmai" — he built Talbush; "the children of the giant" — they dwarfed the sun with their stature (Ibid.).10

had been built seven years before Tzoan of Egypt - How is "had been built" to be understood? If literally, now would a man build a dwelling for his younger son before he had built one for his elder son? For it is written (*Genesis* 9:6): "And the sons of Cham were Kush and *Mitzrayim* [Egypt] and Put and *Canaan*." The intent is, rather, that it was seven times more fruitful than Tzoan (*Sotah* 34b).¹¹

13:23 And they came to the river-bed of Eshkol, and they cut down from there a branch with a cluster of grapes, and they carried it on a pole by twos, and of the pomegranates and of the figs.

and they carried it on a pole by twos - From "a pole," do I not understand "by twos"? Why, then, must "by twos" be stated? By two poles. R. Yitzchak said: There were several poles. Eight carried clusters; one, pomegranates; the other, figs. Yehoshua and Calev carried nothing, either because of their importance or because they were not a party to the counsel of the spies (*Ibid.*).^{12,13}

13:25 And they returned from spying out the land at the end of forty days.

at the end of forty days - Now was it not thirty-nine days? Abbaye said: The Tammuz of that year was full, as it is written (*Lamentations* 1:15): "He has called upon me an appointed time [the ninth of Av] to break my young men" (*Ta'anith* 29a).14

13:26 And they went and they came to Moses and to Aaron and to the entire congregation of the children of Israel to the desert of Paran, to Kadesh; and they returned to them word and to the entire congregation, and they showed them the fruits of the tree.

And they went and they came - R. Yochanan said in the name of R. Shimon b. Yochai: "And they went and they came" — Their going is being likened to their coming, viz., just as their coming was with evil counsel, so, their going (Sotah 35a).¹⁵

to the desert of Paran - It was taught: R. Yossi b. R. Chanina said: The desert of Paran is, in reality, the desert of Sinai. Why was it called "Paran"? Because the Jews were fruitful [paru] and multiplied there (Shabbath 89a). 16

13:27 And they told him and they said: We came to the land to which you sent us, and it is, indeed, flowing with milk and honey, and these are its fruits.

and it is, indeed, flowing with milk and homey - R. Yochanan said in the name of R. Meir: From here it is derived that any slander which does not contain an element of truth in the beginning will not endure in the end (Sotah 35a).¹⁷

13:30 And Calev hushed the people to Moses, and he said: Let us go up, and we shall inherit it, for we shall prevail against it.

And Calev hushed [vayahas] - What is the intent of "vayahas"? Rava said: He incited them [hesitan] with words. Seeing Joshua speaking [in praise of the land], and the spies responding: "Shall this truncated head speak!" he said to himself: If I speak, they shall taunt me likewiseand muzzle me, whereupon he said: "Is it this alone that the son of Amram did to you?" Assuming that he would go on to speak slightingly of him, they remained silent — whereupon he continued: He split the sea for us; he fed us the manna. If he told us: Build ladders and climb to heaven,

would we not heed him? Let us go up, and we shall inherit it! (Ibid.). 18,19

13:31 And the men who went up with him said: We shall not be able to go up to the people for they are stronger than we.

for they are stronger than we - It was taught: R. Chanina b. R. Pappa said: The spies spoke a great [i.e., horrendous] thing at that time, viz.: "for they are stronger mimenu." Read it not "than we," but "than He" — even the Master of the house cannot remove His belongings from there! (Ibid.).²⁰

13:32 And they spread an evil report of the land which they had spied out, to the children of Israel, saying: The land which we passed through to spy out; it is a land which consumes its inhabitants, and all the people we saw therein were men of great stature.

a land which consumes its inhabitants - Rava expounded: The Holy One Blessed be He said: I intended good, and they intended evil. I intended good — that wherever they [the spies] come the highest personage [of the Canaanites] die, that all be busy with his funeral and none make inquiries of them [the spies]. Others say: Iyyov died, and all were in attendance at his eulogy. And they [the spies] intended [i.e., construed it as] evil, saying: "It is a land which consumes its inhabitants" (Sotah 35a).²¹

13:33 And there we saw the Nefilim, the sons of Anak, who come of the Nefilim, and we were in our eyes as grasshoppers; and so we were in their eyes.

and so we were in their eyes - How did they know? When they had their mourner's meal [See above], they ate it under a cedar. The spies, seeing them, climbed into the tree [in fright], and from their perch they heard them saying: We saw men like grasshoppers in the tree (*Ibid.*).²²

14:1 And the entire congregation arose and lifted their voice, and the people cried on that night.

And the entire congregation arose - It was taught: R. Yehudah b. Pazzi said: Can we read this and not be confounded? For the good (*Exodus* 15:1): "Then sang Moses and [(only as inspired by him)] the children of Israel"; for evil: "And the entire congregation arose [of themselves] and lifted their voice, and they cried"! (Yerushalmi Shekalim 1:1).^{1,2}

And the entire congregation arose - When the spies returned, they found Israel occupied in the study of the halachoth of chalah and arlah, whereupon they said: You will not even enter the land, and you busy yourselves with the halachoth of chalah and arlah! At this: "The entire congregation arose and lifted their voice, and they cried" (Yerushalmi Ta'anith 4:5).

and the people cried on that night - Rabbah b. R. Yochanan said: That night was the night of the ninth of Av. The Holy One Blessed be He said to them: You have cried a vain crying; I shall furnish you with a crying for all the generations [the destruction of both Temples occurring on the ninth of Av] (Ta'anith 29a).

14:5 And Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the entire assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.

And Moses and Aaron fell - R. Elazar said: Not all are answered by the tearing of garments, and not all by falling on their faces. Moses and Aaron were answered by falling on their faces, as it is written: "And Moses and Aaron fell on their faces; Joshua and Calev were answered by rending their garments, as it is written (6): "And Joshua the son of Nun and Calev the son of Yefuneh ... tore their garments" (*Ibid.* 14b).^{5,6}

14:10 And the entire congregation said to stone them, and the glory of the L-rd appeared in the tent of meeting to all the children of Israel.

And the entire congregation said, etc. - It is written: "And the entire congregation said to stone them," and: "The glory of the L-rd appeared

in the tent of meeting" [What is the connection]? This teaches us that they took stones and flung them on High (Sotah 35a).

14:16 Because the L-rd cannot bring this people to the land that He swore to them, He has slaughtered them in the desert.

Because the L-rd cannot [mibilti yecholeth] - Should it not be "mibilti yachol" [i.e., the masculine, instead of the feminine form]? R. Elazar said: Moses was hereby saying to the Holy One Blessed be He: L-rd of the Universe, now the peoples of the world will say: His power has been weakened, as that of a woman, and he is not able to save them (Berachoth 32a).8

14:17 And, now, let the power of the L-rd be magnified, I pray You, as You have spoken, saying,

And now, let the power of the L-rd be magnified, I pray You - It was taught: R. Yehoshua b. Levi said: When Moses ascended on high [to receive the Law], the Holy One Blessed be He said to him: Moses, do they not say "Shalom" ["Greetings"] in your city? Moses responded: Is it proper for a servant to say "Shalom" to his Master? The L-rd answered: You should have assisted Me — whereupon Moses said: "And now, let the power of the L-rd be magnified, I pray You ... " (Shabbath 89a).9,10

as You have spoken - It was taught: When Moses ascended on high [to receive the Law], he found the Holy One Blessed be He writing [as one of His attributes]: "withholding wrath," at which he called out: L-rd of the Universe, [qualify it as:] "withholding wrath from the righteous!" He responded: Even from the wicked! Moses: Let the wicked go lost! The L-rd: The day will come when you shall require My rendering. When the Jews sinned [through the spies], the Holy One Blessed be He said to Moses: Did you not say to Me: "withholding wrath from the righteous" [but not from the wicked, such as these]! Moses answered: And did You not tell me: "Even from the wicked"! This is the intent of: "And now, let the power of the L-rd be magnified, I pray you, as You have spoken, saying" [(18): "The L-rd withholds His wrath, etc."] (Sanhedrin 111b).^{11,12}

14.20 And the L-rd said: I have forgiven according to your words.

I have forgiven according to your words - R. Yochanan said: Whence is it derived that the Holy One Blessed be He conceded the correctness of Moses' view [that the nations of the world would deride Him if He destroyed the Jews]? From: "And the L-rd said: I have forgiven according to your words." Which words? That the nations of the world would speak in this manner (Berachoth 33a). 13,14

14:21 But, as I live, the glory of the L-rd shall fill the entire earth.

But, as I live - Rava said in the name of R. Yitzchak: This teaches us that the Holy One Blessed be He said to Moses: You have revived Me with your words (*Ibid.*).¹⁵

14:22 Surely, all the men who saw My glory and My signs that I performed in Egypt and in the desert, and who proved this ten times and did not hearken to My voice,

this ten times - This teaches us that the "decree was sealed" for our forefathers in the desert because of ["this" sin of] slander [against the land] alone (Erchin 15a).16

this ten times - Which were they? Twice at the sea, twice with water, twice with the manna, twice with the quail, once with the golden calf, and once in the desert of Paran (*Ibid.*).¹⁷

14:27 How long for this evil congregation who stir up complaint against Me? The complaints of the children of Israel, which they stir up against Me have I heard.

this evil congregation - From here it is derived that a "congregation" is not fewer than ten Jews [this being the number of the "evil congregation"] (Sanhedrin 74b).¹⁸

14:29 In this desert shall your carcasses fall, and all your number according to all your count, from twenty years and above, who stirred up complaint against Me.

from twenty years - It was taught: R. Hamnuna said: The decree did not affect the tribe of Levi. Whence is this derived? From: "from twenty years and above" — one who is numbered from the age of twenty, to exclude the tribe of Levi, who were numbered from the age of thirty (Bava Bathra 121b).¹⁹

from twenty years - It was taught: R. Acha b. Yaakov said: Just as the decree did not affect those below twenty, it did not affect those above sixty. Whence is this derived? It is derived: "above" [here] - "above", in respect to assessments. Just as there, above sixty is equivalent to below twenty, so here (*Ibid.*).²⁰

14:34 According to the number of days that you spied out the land forty days — a day for a year, a day for a year — shall you bear your sins, forty years, and you shall know My disdain.

According to the number of days - Now did they sin forty years? Did they not sin forty days? This teaches us that if one sins, even one day during the year, he is accounted by Scripture to have sinned the entire year (Chagigah 8b).^{21,22}

14:35 I, the L-rd, have spoken: If I not do this to all of this evil congregation who have assembled against Me: in this desert shall they be consumed, and there shall they die.

and there shall they die - R. Akiva says: The generation of the desert have no share in the world to come, and they do not arise at the resurrection, as it is written: "in this desert shall they be consumed, and there shall they die": "shall they be consumed" — in this world; "and there shall they die" — in [respect to] the world to come (Sanhedrin 110).²³

14:37 And there died the men who had uttered evil report of the land in the plague before the L-rd.

And there died, etc. - The spies have no share in the world to come, as it is written: "And there died the men who had uttered evil report of the land in the plague before the L-rd": "and there died" — in this world; "in the plague" — in [respect to] the world to come (*Ibid.* 108a).²⁴

who had uttered evil report of the land - R. Shimon b. Lakish said: They died an unnatural death. How so? R. Shila expounded: Their tongue uncoiled and descended to their navel, and worms came forth from their tongue and entered their navel, and emerged from their navel and entered their tongue. R. Nachman b. Yitzchak said: They died of diphtheria [this being the death for slander] (Sotah 35a).²⁵

who had uttered evil report of the land - It was taught: R. Elazar b. Prata said: Come and see how horrendous is the power of slander. Now if the spies, who slandered trees and stones, as it is written: "who had uttered evil report of the land," met such a fate, how much more so one who utters an evil report of his neighbor! (Erchin 15a).²⁶

14:38 And Joshua the son of Nun and Calev the son of Yefuneh lived of those men who went to spy out the land.

And Joshua ... and Calev the son of Yefuneh lived - It was taught: Joshua and Calev took the portion of the spies in the land, as it is written: "And Joshua the son of Nun and Calev the son of Yefuneh lived of those men." How is "lived" to be understood? If literally, this is already written, viz. (32:12): "and none were left of them except Calev the son of Yefuneh and Joshua the son of Nun." What, then, is the intent of "lived"? They lived of [i.e., were enriched by] their [the spies'] portion (Bava Bathra 118b).²⁷

14:44 And they forged forward to ascend to the top of the mountain, but the ark of the covenant of the L-rd and Moses did not stir from the midst of the camp.

but the ark of the covenant of the L-rd - It was taught: R. Yehudah b.

Lakish says: Two arks traveled with Moses in the desert, one with the tablets, and one with the remnants of the [first] tablets. The one with the tablets reposed in the tent of meeting, as it is written: "but the ark of the covenant of the L-rd and Moses did not stir from the midst of the camp"; the one with the remnants would enter and leave with them (Yerushalmi Shekalim 6:1).²⁸

15:2 Speak to the children of Israel and say to them: When you come to the land of your habitations, which I give to you,

When you come, etc. - It was taught: R. Akiva says: "When you come to the land of your habitations, etc.": Scripture hereby prescribes libations for a small bamah [an individual temporary altar]. But perhaps a great bamah [a congregational temporary altar] is intended? [This is not so, for] "to the land of your habitations" implies [the type of altar which obtains in] all habitations [i.e., a small bamah] (Zevachim 111a).

When you come, etc. - Scripture hereby teaches us that libations were not prescribed for Israel until they entered the land (Sifrei).²

15:3 And you offer a fire-offering to the L-rd: a burnt-offering, or a sacrifice, to set aside a vow or as a gift-offering, or for your festivals, to offer a sweet savor unto the L-rd, from the cattle or from the sheep.

And you offer a fire-offering to the L-rd - The Rabbis taught: I might think that everything brought as a fire-offering required libations, even a meal-offering; it is, therefore, written: "a burnt-offering." Whence is a peace-offering derived [as requiring libations]? From: "a sacrifice." Whence is a thank-offering derived? From: "or a sacrifice" (Menachoth 90b).

And you offer a fire-offering to the L-rd, etc. - The Rabbis taught: "And you offer a fire-offering to the L-rd" — general; "to set aside a vow or as a gift-offering" — specific; "a sweet savor" — a reversion to the general [in which instance the general is of the nature of the specific, viz.:] just as the specific is not fixedly mandated, so, all that is not fixedly mandated, to include: the offspring of consecrated animals and

their exchanges, a burnt-offering which obtains from what is left over [from expenditures for other offerings], a guilt-offering sent out to pasture [until it sustains a blemish, when it is sold and the monies used for a congregational gift-offering], and all sacrifices not slaughtered with that particular sacrifice in mind (*Ibid.* 91a).⁴

a fire-offering to the L-rd, a burnt-offering - Let Scripture write: "to set aside a vow or as a gift-offering," and "burnt-offering" would not be needed. [This is not so, for] if "burnt-offering" were not written, I would reason thus: "And you offer a fire-offering to the L-rd" — general; "to set aside a vow or as a gift-offering" — specific; "a sweet savor" — a reversion to the general [in which instance the general is of the nature of the specific, viz.:] just as the specific does not come for [atonement of] sin, so, all that does not come for sin, to exclude a sin-offering and a guilt-offering, which do come for sin, and to include a first-born, and a tithe, and a Paschal offering, which do not come for sin; it is, therefore, written: "a burnt-offering" [to counter-indicate the above] (Ibid.). 5.6

to set aside a vow or as a gift-offering - This teaches us that all that is brought as a vow or as a gift-offering requires libations, and all that is not so brought, does not require libations — to exclude [from the requirement of libations] a first-born, a tithe, a Paschal offering, a sin-offering, and a guilt-offering (Menachoth 90b).

or as a gift-offering - Why does Scripture write: "or as a gift-offering" [and not, simply, "and as a gift-offering"?] I would think [if "and" were written] that libations are not required unless both a vow and a gift-offering are brought: it is, therefore, written [(by way of "or")] that each, individually, also requires libations (Ibid. 91a).

or for your festivals - All that is offered on your festivals requires libations, including the burnt-offering of the pilgrimage and the peace-offerings of the festival [though they are not festival offerings per se] (*Ibid.* 90b).9

or for your festivals - Why does Scripture write "or for your festivals"? ["or" connoting extension of inclusion]. I might think [(if "or" were not written)] that if one brought a burnt-offering and a peace-offering as a vow, or a burnt-offering and a peace-offering as a gift, since the two

are included in one category ["vow" or "gift" respectively], one libation would be sufficient for both; it is, therefore, written: "or" [to counter-indicate the above] (*Ibid.* 91a).¹⁰

from the cattle, etc. - If it is already stated: "a sacrifice," why need it be written: "from the cattle"? Because it is written: "a burnt-offering," I might think that even burnt-offerings of fowl were included [as requiring] libations; it is, therefore, written: "from the cattle or from the sheep" (*Ibid.* 90b).11

or from the sheep - Why need Scripture write: "or from the sheep"? I might think [if it were not written], that this were so [i.e., that two libations are required] only with two different kinds of animals, but two simultaneous offerings of the same kind of animal required only one libation; it is, therefore, written ["or from the sheep," to counterindicate this] (*Ibid.* 91a).¹²

15:5 And wine, as a libation, the fourth part of a hin shall you offer for the burnt-offering or for the sacrifice, for one lamb.

for the burnt-offering, etc. - "for the burnt-offering" — this refers to the burnt offering of the leper; "for the sacrifice" — this refers to the sin-offering of the leper; "or for the sacrifice" — this refers to the guilt-offering of the leper. From here it is derived that the sin-offering and the guilt-offering of the leper require libations (*Ibid.* 91a).¹³

for one lamb - It was taught: R. Nathan says: "for the lamb" — this is the lamb of the child-bearing woman; "for one lamb" — this refers to the eleventh [animal, erroneously called the tenth] of the tithe, which is sacrificed as a peace-offering [it being "one," i.e., unique,] in the respect that in all of Scripture we never find the ancillary being more stringent than the fundamental [except in this instance, where the eleventh requires a libation and the tithe (i.e., the tenth itself) does not] (Ibid. b).14

15:6 Or for the ram shall you offer as a meal-offering two

tenth-measures of flour mixed with oil, the third part of a hin.

Or for the ram - What is the intent of "the ram"? R. Shesheth said: To include [as requiring libations] the ram of Aaron [on Yom Kippur] (*Ibid.*).¹⁵

Or the ram - R. Yochanan says: "Or for the ram" — to include a palgess [a thirteen month sheep] as requiring libations, though one does not thereby fulfill the obligation of his sacrifice, [requiring either a "sheep" (in its first month) or a "ram" (after the thirteenth month) to do so] (Chullin 23a).¹⁶

15:8 And when you offer a bullock as a burnt-offering or as a sacrifice, to set aside a vow or as a peace-offering to the L-rd.

And when you offer a bullock - It was taught: A bullock was in the general category [of sacrificial animals]. Why, then, was it singled out for special mention? To serve as the basis for a comparison, viz.: Just as a bullock is specified as being brought as a vow or as a gift, so, all that are brought as vows or gifts require libations, to exclude the goats of a sin-offering, which, not being brought as vows or gift, do not require libations (Menachoth 90b).¹⁷

as a burnt-offering or as a sacrifice - What is the intent of: "or" as a sacrifice"? I might think that this [i.e., the requirement for distinct libations] applies if one brings a burnt-offering and a peace-offering as a vow or a burnt-offering and a peace-offering as a gift; but if he brings either two burnt-offerings, one as a vow and the other as a gift, I might think that since the designation "peace-offering" is one, and the designation "burnt-offering" one, only one libation is required; it is, therefore, written: ["or as a sacrifice," in counter-indication of the above ("or" connoting separateness)] (Ibid. 91b). 18

or as a peace-offering - What is the intent of: "or as a peace-offering"? I might think that this [i.e., the requirement for distinct libations] applies if one brings two burnt-offerings or two peace-offerings, one as a vow and the other as a gift; but if he brings two burnt-offerings as a vow or two burnt-offerings as a gift, or two peace-offerings as a vow or

two peace-offerings as a gift, I might think that since the designation "burnt-offering" is one and the designation "vow" one, only one libation is required; it is, therefore, written ["or as a peace-offering," in counter-indication of the above ("or" connoting separateness)] (Ibid.).¹⁹

15:11 Thus shall it be done for one ox, or for one ram, or for a sheep among the lambs, or among the kids.

for one ox - What is the intent of this? Since we find that Scripture distinguished between the libations for a ram and those for a [small] sheep, I might think that it distinguished similarly between those for a par [a large ox] and those for an egel [a small one]; it is, therefore, written: "Thus shall it be done for one ox" [to show that no such distinction is to be made] (Ibid.).²⁰

or for one ram - What is the intent of this? Since we find that Scripture distinguished between the libations for a one-year-old and those for a two-year-old, I might think that it distinguished similarly between those for a two-year-old and those for a three-year-old; it is, therefore, written: "or for one ram" [to show that no such distinction is to be made] (*Ibid.*).²¹

or for a sheep among the lambs - What is the intent of "among the lambs"? Since we find that Scripture distinguished between the libations for a small male sheep and those for a ram, I might think that it distinguished similarly between those for a small female sheep and those for a large one; it is, therefore, written; "or for a sheep among the lambs" [to show that no such distinction is to be made] (Ibid.).²²

or among the kids - What is the intent of this? Since we find that Scripture distinguished between the libations for a small sheep and those for a ram, I might think that it distinguished similarly between those for a small goat and those for a large one; it is, therefore, written; "or among the kids" [to show that no such distinction is to be made] (*Ibid.*).²³

15:12 According to the number that you offer, so shall you do for each one according to their number.

According to the number that you offer - "According to the number that you offer" — and not less; "so shall you do for each one according to their number" — and not more (Sifrei).²⁴

15:13 All the native-born shall do thus with these, to offer a fire-offering, a sweet savor to the L-rd.

All the native-born shall do thus - The Rabbis taught: "All the native-born" — The native-born bring libations, but gentiles do not bring libations. I might then think that his burnt-offering does not require libations; it is, therefore, written: "thus" [to counter-indicate the pove] (Zevachim 45a).25

All the native-born shall do this - It was taught: ["All] the native-born" — This teaches us that wine [alone, even without a sacrifice] may be offered as a libation. How much? Three logs. Whence do I derive that if he wishes to give more he may do so? From (15): "shall be" [connoting addition]. I might think that he could give less; it is, therefore, written; "thus" [to counter-indicate this] (Menachoth 107a). 26,27

15:14 And if a stranger sojourn among you, or whoever is among you throughout your generations, and he would offer a fire-offering, a sweet savor to the L-rd, as you do, so shall he do.

as you do, so shall he do - It was taught: I might think, since it is written: "a fire-offering, a sweet savor to the L-rd," that [for proselytization] all that is consumed by fire, even a meal-offering, [is included]; it is, therefore, written: "as you do, so shall he [i.e., the prospective proselyte] do"; just as you [entered into the covenant] by varieties of blood [i.e., circumcision, sacrifices], so shall he. In that case, why do we not say: "Just as you, through burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, so, he, through burnt-offerings and peace-offerings"? [the latter is absent in the case of the proselyte] For it is written (15): "as you, so the sojourner" — I have likened him to you, and not to your offerings. And whence is it derived that fowl is herein included [in the

context of burnt-offerings]? From: "a fire-offering, a sweet savor to the L-rd": What is it that is entirely "to the L-rd" [and not for human consumption]? A burnt-offering of fowl. [With the other burnt-offerings, the skin, at least, goes to the priests] (Krituth 9a).²⁸

15:15 The congregation, one statute shall there be for you and for the stranger that sojourns [among you], an everlasting statute unto your generations: as you, so the sojourner shall be, before the L-rd.

The congregation, one statute - The Rabbis taught: A proselyte may marry a mamzereth [one begotten of an illicit relationship]. These are the words of R. Yossi. Whence does he derive it? Though it is written: "The congregation, one statute shall there be for you and for the stranger that sojourns among you," "one statute" interrupts the connection [between "congregation" and "stranger," indicating that proselytes are not considered part of "the congregation," to whom mamzerim are forbidden] (Kiddushin 73b).²⁹

as you, so the sojourner - It was taught: Rebbi says: "as you" — as your forefathers, viz.: just as your forefathers entered the covenant through circumcision, ritual immersion, and the atonement [effected by] the blood [of the sacrifices], so they [the proselytes] enter through these alone. But in that case, since there are no sacrifices today, let us not accept converts! R. Acha b. Yaakov answered: It is written: "And if a stranger sojourn among you ... who is among you throughout your generations" [i.e., they are to be accepted in all generations, even those in which sacrifices do not obtain] (Krituth 9a).30

15:16 One Torah and one judgment shall there be for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you.

and one judgment shall there be for you - It was taught: R. Chiyya b. Abba said in the name of R. Yochanan: A proselyte requires [the conventional] three judges. Whence is this derived? From: "one judgment" (Yevamoth 47b).³¹

15:18 Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: When you come to the land whither I bring you,

When you come to the land - It was taught: "When you come to the land" — I might think that even the entry of one or two spies [would satisfy the condition of "coming"]; it is, therefore, written: "When you come" — when all of you come, and not just a part. And when Ezra brought them back [from the Babylonian exile], not all of them returned, whence it is derived that the mitzvah of challah in our time is a Rabbinical ordinance [and not a Scriptural injunction] (Kethuvoth 25a).³²

When you come to the land - It was taught: R. Yishmael says: The Torah varied [linguistically] this "coming" from all the other "comings" in Scripture, it being written in the latter instances: "And it shall be, when you come"; "And it shall be, when He shall bring you" [all such expressions connoting permanent settlement], whereas here it is written: "When you come" [connoting the moment of arrival], to teach that the mitzvah of challah devolved upon them as soon as they entered the land (Sifrei).³³

whither I bring you - It was taught: R. Akiva says: Produce of Eretz Yisrael which left the land is not subject to the *mitzvah* of *challah*. Whence is this derived? From: "that I bring you *there*" — *there* you are liable, and not outside the land (*Yerushalmi Challah* 2:1).³⁴

15:19 And it shall be, when you eat of the bread of the land, you shall offer up an offering to the L-rd.

of the bread of the land - It was taught: I might think that meissah [flour on which hot water was poured] or chalitah [flour put into hot water] were subject to the mitzvah of chalah; it is, therefore, written "bread" [which excludes the others] (Pesachim 37b).³⁵

of the bread of the land - It was taught: Only the following grains are subject to challah: wheat, barley, rye, oats, and spelt, but not rice or millet. Whence is this derived? Resh Lakish said: It is derived: "bread" [here]-"bread," in respect to matzoh, it being written here: "And it shall be when you eat of the bread of the land," and, in respect to matzoh (Deuteronomy 16:3): "bread of affliction." Just as there, the five species are indicated, so, here, the five species are intended (Menachoth 70b). 36

of the bread of the land - It was taught: Grain which has not achieved a third of its growth is [notwithstanding] subject to *challah*. Whence is this derived? It is written "bread" in respect to *challah*, and "bread" in respect to matzoh (*Deuteronomy* 16:3). Just as the "bread" in respect to matzoh is that which is susceptible to the distinction of unleavened and leavened, so, that which is written in respect to *challah* [and this distinction obtains even with less than one-third growth] (*Yerushalmi Challah* 1:3).³⁷

of the bread of the land - It was taught: Dough that was rolled while in the possession of the gentile is not subject to *challah*. Why is this so? For it is written: "of the bread"— and not all of the bread [an instance such as the above being excluded] (*Ibid.* 3:5).³⁸

of the bread of the land - It was taught: I might think that if one did not separate *challah* from the dough, he does not separate it from the bread; it is, therefore, written: "And it shall be when you eat of the *bread* of the land" (Sifrei).³⁹

you shall offer up an offering to the L-rd - This refers to the "great terumah" [taken from one's produce (see 18:27)]. But perhaps it refers to the challah offering! [This cannot be, for](20)"challah, you shall offer up an offering" already speaks of challah. How, then, is "you shall offer up an offering to the L-rd" to be understood? As referring to the "great terumah" [which is taken before the challah is separated] (Ibid.).40

15:20 The first of your dough, *challah*, you shall offer up as an offering to the L-rd; as the *terumah* of the threshing floor, so shall you offer it up.

The first of your dough - The "dogs' dough," if the shepherds eat of it, is subject to challah. If they do not eat of it, it is not subject to challah. Whence is this derived? From: "your dough"—your dough is subject to challah and not that intended for an animal (Challah 1:8, see Bartenurah). 41

The first of your dough - The Rabbis taught: "The first of your dough"—according to the quantity of your dough. And how much is the quantity of your dough? According to [the quantity of] the dough [that you would prepare] in the desert. And how much is the dough of the desert? The quantity of seven logs, an egg, and a fifth of an egg, as it is written (Exodus 16:13): "And the omer was one-tenth of an eifah" (Eruvin 83b). 42,43

The first of your dough - R. Assi said: The dough of ma'aser sheni [the second tithe] according to the Rabbis [who hold with R. Meir, that ma'aser sheni is considered the property of the individual] is subject to challah, it being written: "your dough" — [challah is taken] of what is yours (Pesachim 38a).44

The first of your dough - "your dough" — and not that of gentiles, and not that of the sanctuary (Menachoth 67a). 45

The first of your dough "your dough"—to include that which is owned in partnership (Chullin 135b).46

The first of your dough - Its intermixture with water marks "the first of your dough" (Yerushalmi Challah 3:1).47

challah, you shall offer up as an offering [terumah] - It was taught: Terumah, Terumath ma'aser, terumath ma'aser of demai, challah, and bikkurim combine with each other [to form the minimum forbidden quantity] and to render one liable to the chomesh [the additional one-fifth fine for eating these unintentionally]. Why so? For they are all called terumah, [in respect to which the chomesh is explicitly stipulated]. In respect to challah it is written: "challah, you shall offer up as terumah"; and bikkurim, too, are called terumah, as it was taught (Deuteronomy 12:17): "and the terumah of your hands" — this is bikkurim (Me'ilah 15b). 48

challah, you shall offer up terumah - It was taught: Whence is it derived that challah is subject to terumah? From: "challah, you shall offer up terumah" — from challah you shall separate terumah (Yerushalmi Challah 1:5).49

as the terumah of the threshing floor - It was taught: When does the *mitzvah* of *challah* obtain? When the dough can be cut into pieces [i.e., after it has been kneaded]. Whence is this derived? From: "as the *terumah* of the threshing floor, so shall you offer it up" — Just as the *terumah* of the threshing floor is taken from what is ready [for eating], so, *challah* (*Ibid.*). 50-51

as the terumah of the threshing floor - Challah is hereby being likened to the terumah of the threshing floor. Just as one part of a thousand suffices for the terumah of the threshing floor, so does it suffice for challah (Sifrei).⁵²

15:21 Of the first of your dough shall you give to the L-rd an offering throughout your generations.

Of the first of your dough - It was taught: Whence is it derived that terumah is subject to the separation of the challa? From: "Of the first of your dough" — Of that which is called "first" [i.e., terumah] shall you offer up challah (Yerushalmi Challah 1:5).53

Of the first of your dough - It was taught: If one said: All of my dough is *challah*, he has said nothing, but some amount must be left over, it being written: "of the first," and not *all* of the first (*Ibid*. 1:6).⁵⁴

shall you give to the L-rd - It was taught: If one betrothes a woman with terumah, she is halachically betrothed. And though it is written: [of terumah] "shall you give to the L-rd" [and betrothal must be effected with his property], it is not written of it "consecrated" [so that as long as it is in his possession, it is still considered his] (Kiddushin 53a).55

shall you give to the L-rd an offering - This teaches us that there must be the amount of "a gift" [i.e., it must be substantial enough to be regarded as a "gift"] — whence it was derived: The [minimum] amount of challah for a private individual is one twenty-fourth, and for a baker, [who bakes larger quantities], one forty-eighth. [A woman, likewise, who bakes for the market must also give one-forty eighth (though she bakes smaller quantities than a man)] Why so? A man tends to be magnanimous; a woman, withholding (Sifrei). 56,57

15:22 And if you err and not do all of these *mitzvoth* that the L-rd has spoken to Moses,

And if you err, etc. - It was taught: These verses relate to idolatry. Whence is this derived? From: "And if you err and not do all of these mitzvoth." Which mitzvah is equivalent to all of the mitzvoth? That of [shunning] idolatry (Horiyoth 8a).⁵⁸

all of these mitzvoth - It was taught: Whence is it derived that idolatry is more severe than all the trangressions in the Torah? From: "And if you err and not do all of these mitzvoth" [see above] (Yerushalmi Nedarim 3:9).59

15:23 Everything that the L-rd commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day the L-rd commanded and further, throughout your generations.

your generations - It was taught in the school of R. Yishmael: "Tzav" ["command"] connotes "motivate," for the present and for future generations. The present, as it is written (Deuteronomy 3:28): "And command Joshua, and strengthen him, and encourage him." For future generations, as it is written: "from the day the L-rd commanded and further, throughout your generations" (Kiddushin 29a). 60,61

throughout your generations - One who is suspected of idolatry is suspected of all the transgressions in the Torah — not retroactively, but proactively, it being written: "from the day the L-rd commanded and further, throughout your generations" (Tosefta Bechoroth 8:3).62

15:24 And it shall be, if [away] from the eyes of the congregation it were done in error, then all the congregation shall offer one young bullock as a burnt-offering as a sweet savor to the L-rd, with its meal-offering and its libation as ordained, and one kid of the goats as a sin-offering.

And it shall be, if from the eyes of the congregation - The House of the Nassi decreed a fast, but no rains came, upon which Hosea Zeira of the Colleagues taught: "And it shall be, if from the eyes of the congregation it were done in error." This can be compared to a bride. If her eyes are beautiful, the rest of her body need not be examined; if her eyes are not beautiful, all of her body must be examined [Similarly, if the "eyes of the congregation," the Sanhedrin, are deficient, the rest of the generation is, likewise, deficient] (Ta'anith 24a).63

And it shall be, if from the eyes of the congregation - If the beth-din ruled, and one of them was a proselyte or a mamzer, or a Nathin, or too old to beget children there is no liability, it being written here: "congregation," and, elsewhere (35:24): "And the congregation shall judge" — Just as there [it is indicated that] all must be qualified to

judge; here, too, it is necessary that all be qualified to judge (*Horiyoth* 4b).⁶⁴

And it shall be, if from the eyes of the congregation - It was taught: R. Shimon b. Elazar says: If six tribes sinned [as the result of a mistaken ruling of beth-din] and they constituted the majority of the population; or seven tribes, though they did not constitute the majority of the population, they [beth-din] bring a bullock. Why so? For it is written: "if from the eyes of the congregation," connoting the lesser part, and (27): "for to all the people, it was an error," connoting the greater part! How is this to be reconciled? [By understanding it as follows:] If six tribes sinned, and they constituted the majority of the population; or if seven tribes sinned, though they did not constitute the majority of the population, they [beth-din] are liable [for the offering] (Ibid.5a). 65,66

And it shall be, if from the eyes of the congregation - It was taught: Whence is it derived that the [erroneous] ruling pertains to beth-din and the [erroneous] deed to the congregation? Abbaye answered: From: "And it shall be, if from the eyes of the congregation [i.e., the beth-din], it were done [by the congregation] in error" (Ibid. b).⁶⁷

and one kid of the goats as a sin-offering - The Rabbis taught: The bullock for [unwitting] idolatry precedes the kid. Why should this be so? Is this [the kid] not a sin-offering, and that [the bullock] not a burnt-offering, [which always follows a sin-offering!] In the West [i.e., Eretz Yisrael] they answered: "sin-offering" ["chatath"] is written here defective, without an aleph [to indicate that this sin-offering does not take precedence]. Rava answered: It is written: "as ordained" [and the order of verses has "burnt-offering" preceding "sin-offering"] (Ibid. 13a).68

15:25 And the priest shall make atonement for the entire congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them, for it was unwitting; and they have brought their offering: a fire-offering to the L-rd, and their sin-offering before the L-rd for their error.

and their sin-offering ... for their error - "their sin-offering" — this is

the kid for [unwitting] idolatry; "their error" — this is the bullock for unwitting sin [in general] of the congregation; "their sin-offering ... for their error" — Scripture is hereby apprising us that their sin-offering is comparable to [the offering for] their error [requiring, as the latter does, the burning of the devoted portions] (Zevachim 41a).⁶⁹

15:26 And it shall be forgiven to the entire congregation of the children of Israel and to the stranger who sojourns in their midst, for to all the people it was an error.

And it shall be forgiven to the entire congregation - It was taught: R. Yehudah says: One tribe [committing idolatry in error] imposes upon all the tribes [the obligation of an offering]. Whence is this derived? From: "And it shall be forgiven to the entire congregation of the children of Israel" (Yerushalmi Pesachim 7:6).⁷⁰

for to all the people it was an error - It was taught: Whence is it derived that the [erroneous] ruling pertains to beth-din and the [erroneous] deed to the congregation? Rava answered: From: "for to all the people it was an error" (Horiyoth 5b).71

15:27 And if one soul sin unwittingly, then he shall bring a shegoat of the first year as a sin-offering.

And if one soul - It was taught: [Even] if an anointed priest sinned, [committing idolatry unwittingly], he offers a she-goat, as any other single individual. Whence is this derived? From: "And if one soul" — Whether a Jew in general, or the Nassi, or an anointed priest — all are subsumed in: "And if one soul" (*Ibid.* 7b).⁷²

And if one soul - It was taught: Beth-din is liable [for an offering] only [if they ruled erroneously in respect to idolatry] in an instance in which deliberate transgression is punishable by kareth [cutting-off] and unwitting transgression by a sin-offering, it being written: "And if one soul" — the rule pertaining to this latter formulation [of "And if one soul"] being derived from the rule pertaining to the former formulation [in Leviticus 4:27, where the above qualification is indicated] (Ibid. 8a).⁷³

15:28 And the priest shall make atonement for the soul that is unwitting in sinning unwittingly before the L-rd, to atone for him, and he shall be forgiven.

And the priest shall make atonement, etc. - It was taught: The anointed priest is not liable [for the offering for unwitting idolatry] unless he sinned as a result of forgetting the halachah, it being written: "And the priest shall make atonement for the soul that is unwitting in sinning unwittingly": "the soul" — this is the anointed priest; "that is unwitting" — this is the Nassi; "in sinning unwittingly" — one whose sin [i.e., one who requires a sin-offering for a sin in general] on the basis of unwittingness alone, as opposed to the anointed priest, whose sin [i.e., whose sin-offering is brought] not on the basis of unwittingness [alone, but on that of unwittingness arising from] forgetfulness of the halachah (Ibid. b). 74,75

And the priest shall make atonement, etc. - It was taught: "And the priest shall make atonement for the soul that is unwitting in sinning unwittingly" — This teaches us that the priest may make atonement for himself (Menachoth 74a).⁷⁶

15:29 The native-born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourns among you, one Torah shall there be for you for him who acts unwittingly.

one Torah, etc. - [sinning, in respect to] the entire Torah is hereby likened to [sinning in respect to] idolatry, viz.: Just as with idolatry one is not liable until he commits an act with his body, so, with [sinning in respect to] all [the *mitzvoth*] of the Torah (*Shabbath* 153b).⁷⁷

one Torah, etc. - [sinning, in respect to] the entire Torah is hereby likened to [sinning in respect to] idolatry, viz.: Just as [the sin in respect to] idolatry is [acting, where there should be] abstention, so, [sins in respect to] the entire Torah [entail a sin-offering where there is acting when there should be] abstention. This excludes [from a sin-offering non-fulfillment of] the Pesach and of circumcision, which, being commandments of acting, do not entail a sin-offering for unwitting [abstention] (Makkoth 13b).⁷⁸

one Torah, etc. - [Sinning, in respect to] the entire Torah is hereby likened to [sinning in respect to] idolatry, viz.: Just as with idolatry, deliberate transgression is punishable by kareth [cutting-off] and unwitting transgression by a sin-offering, so, with the entire Torah, only those sins are herein subsumed whose deliberate transgression is punishable by kareth and whose unwitting transgression by a sin-offering. From here it is derived that beth-din is not liable for "the bullock of forgetfulness" [of a halachah] unless they ruled [erroneously] in respect to a sin whose deliberate transgression is punishable by kareth and whose unwitting transgression by a sin-offering (Horiyoth 8a).⁷⁹

one Torah, etc. - What is the intent of this? Since we find that the Torah distinguished [in the instance of an idolatrous city] between the majority [of the inhabitants sinning] and the minority — in the instance of the majority, death being by the sword, and possessions being destroyed; in that of the minority, death being by stoning, and possessions being spared — we might think that it likewise distinguished between their offerings [in an instance of unwitting idolatry]; it is, therefore, written: "one Torah" (Ibid.).80

one Torah, etc. - One who blasphemes does not bring a sin-offering for unwitting trangression or a suspended guilt-offering in an instance of non-certainty. Why so? For it is written: "one Torah shall there be for you for him who acts unwillingly." This excludes a blasphemer, who does not commit an action (Krituth 2a).81

15:30 And the soul who acts with a high hand, of the native born and of the sojourner — it is the *L-rd* whom he blasphemes; and that soul shall be cut off from the midst of its people.

And the soul who acts, etc. - "And the soul who acts with a high hand"

— This is [the likes of] Menashe b. Chezkiah, who would sit and expound vain homilies. Of him tradition has it (*Isaiah* 5:18): "Woe to those who draw forth iniquity with cords of vanity!" (*Sanhedrin* 99b).⁸²

it is the L-rd whom he blasphemes [megadef] - The Rabbis taught: "it is the L-rd whom he blasphemes": Issi b. Yehudah says: This [instance of the blasphemer] is as one would say to his neighbor: "You have

scraped out the dish [of its contents] and have taken some [of the dish itself with you!" "Megadef" ("blaspheme") - "Megaref" ("scrape"), i.e., the epitome of denial], Issi holding "megadef" to refer to blaspheming of the L-rd (Krituth 7b).83

it is the L-rd whom he "megadef" - It was taught: R. Elazar b. Azaryah says: Scripture here speaks of idolatry. The sages say Scripture here is ordaining kareth for blaspheming of the L-rd (*Ibid.*).⁸⁴

15:31 Because the word of the L-rd he has despised and wiped out His commandment, cut-off, cut-off shall be that soul; its transgression is in it.

Because the word of the L-rd he has despised - It was taught: If one came to a squalid passageway while reciting the *Shema*, he must interrupt the recitation. If he did not do so, of him Scripture says: "Because the word of the L-rd he has despised" (*Berachoth* 24b).85

Because the word of the L-rd he has despised - The Rabbis taught: "Because the word of the L-rd he has despised" — this is a heretic. A different view: "Because the word of the L-rd he has despised" — this is one who wilfully misinterprets the law (Sanhedrin 99a).86

Because the word of the L-rd he has despised - It was also taught: "Because the word of the L-rd he has despised" — this is one who says: There is no Torah from Heaven. And even if he says that all of the Torah is from Heaven except for one verse, which was not stated by the Holy One Blessed be He, but which Moses stated of his own accord; or even [if he says: except] this one inference, this one a fortiori conclusion, this one parallel — he is subsumed in: "Because the word of the L-rd he has despised" (Ibid. 99a).87

Because the word of the L-rd he has despised - It was taught: R. Meir would say: One who studies Torah but does not teach it is subsumed in: "Because the word of the L-rd he has despised." R. Nathan says: One who is not diligent in reviewing his learning. R. Nehorai says: One who has the opportunity to study Torah, but does not do so (*Ibid.*).88-90

Because the word of the L-rd he has despised - R. Yishmael says:

"Because the word of the L-rd he has despised"— this is an idolator. Where is this implied? It was taught in the school of R. Yishmael: "Because the word of the L-rd he has despised": This refers to one who despises the word [spoken by the L-rd] to Moses on Sinai, viz. (Exodus 20:2,3): "I am the L-rd, your G-d ... You shall have no other god beside Me" (Ibid.).91

and wiped out His commandment - This refers to one who "wipes out" the covenant of the flesh [i.e., circumcision] (*Ibid.*).92

And wiped out His commandment - It was taught: "Because the word of the L-rd he has despised" — This tells me only of one who despises words of Torah. Whence is it understood to subsume even one who denies one verse, such as (Genesis 36:22): "And the sister of Lotan was Timna," one Targum, such as (Genesis 31:47): "And Lavan called it "yegar sahadutha," one a fortiori argument, such as (Genesis 4:15): "Cain shall be avenged seven-fold"? From: "and wiped out His commandment" (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 10:1).93

cut-off, cut-off' - What is the intent of: "cut-off, cut-off''? "cut-off'' - in this world; "cut-off'' - in the next world (Shevuoth 13a).94

its transgression is in it - This teaches us that if he repents before he dies, death purges him of his sin [i.e., it shall be cut off only when its transgression is still in it, but not if he repents] (*Ibid.*).95

its transgression is in it - What is the intent of: "its transgression is in it"? To teach that the soul is cut off and the transgression remains in it — whence it is derived that idolatry is one of those sins, payment for which is exacted from a man in this world with the principal remaining for [punishment in] the next world (Yerushalmi Peah 1:1).96

15:32 And the children of Israel were in the desert and they found a man gathering wood on the Sabbath day.

And the children of Israel were in the desert — Scripture here speaks pejoratively of Israel. They observed only the first Sabbath; and the second, they desecrated (Sifrei).⁹⁷

and they found - This teaches us that Moses appointed guards and they found him gathering wood (*Ibid.*).98

and they found a man gathering wood - It was taught: R. Akiva says: The "gatherer" was Tzelafchad. Whence is this derived? It is written here: "And the children of Israel were in the *desert*," and, elsewhere (27:3): "Our father died in the *desert*." Just as there, the man is Tzelafchad; here, too, it is Tzelafchad (*Shabbath* 96a).99

and they found a man gathering wood - This teaches us that they found him pulling wood from the ground [gathering by itself not being a transgression] (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 5:1).¹⁰⁰

15:33 And they brought him near — those who found him gathering wood — to Moses and Aaron and to the entire congregation.

those who found him gathering wood - It was taught: Whence is the prerequisite of forewarning Scripturally derived? It was taught in the school of R. Yishmael: From: "those who found him gathering wood," the implication being that they warned him [after finding him] and he still continued gathering (Sanhedrin 41a).¹⁰¹

those who found him gathering wood - Why is this stated? Is it not already written: "and they found a man gathering wood"? We are hereby taught that they forewarned him, specifying the forbidden labor — whence it is derived that in the instance of all Scriptural proto-labors there must be forewarning specifying the forbidden labor (Sifrei).¹⁰²

15:34 And they placed him under guard, for it was not made clear what should be done with him.

for it was not made clear, etc.- It was taught: Moses our teacher knew that the gatherer had to be put to death, it being written (*Exodus* 31:14): "Its desecrators shall be put to death." What he did not know was the specific death penalty, as it is written: "for it was not made clear" (*Sanhedrin* 78b).¹⁰³

15:35 And the L-rd said to Moses: The man is to be put to death. The entire congregation shall stone him outside the camp.

the entire congregation-In the presence of the entire congregation. But perhaps it is to be understood literally, i.e., that the entire congregation kills him! [This is not so, for] it is written (*Deuteronomy* 17:7): "The hand of the witnesses shall be against him first" [to kill him]. How, then, is: "The entire congregation shall stone him" to be understood? In the *presence* of the entire congregation (*Sifrei*). 104

outside the camp-This teaches us that all death penalties are carried out outside of beth-din (Ibid.).¹⁰⁵

15:38 Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them that they make for themselves *tzitzith* [fringes]on the corners of their garments throughout their generations; and let them put on the *tzitzith* of the corner a string of blue.

Speak to the sons of Israel-It was taught: R. Yehudah said in the name of Rav: Whence is it derived that tzitzith made by a gentile are invalid? From: "Speak to the sons of Israel ... that they make for themselves tzitzith" — the sons of Israel shall make, and not gentiles (Menachoth 42a). 106

the sons of Israel-the sons of Israel, and not the daughters of Israel (Hagahoth Maimoni, Tzitzith 1:12).¹⁰⁷

that they make for themselves-"for themselves" — of their own, to exclude stolen tzitzith (Succah 9a).¹⁰⁸

that they make for themselves tzitzith-The Rabbis taught: Tzitzith need only [be so long as to] protrude [from the garment], and tzitzith need protrude only slightly. And the elders of Beth Shammai and Beth Hillel have already gone up to the loft of Yochanan b. Betheira and pronounced: Tzitzith have no [prescribed] size (Menachoth 41b). 109

that they make for themselves tzitzith- The Rabbis taught: "Tzitzith" is an extension, as it is written (Ezekiel 8:3): "And he took me by a lock

[tzitzith] of my head." And Abbaye said: And they must be separated [at the ends] as the forelocks of the Arameans (Ibid. 42a). 110,111

on the corners of their garments - It was taught in the school of R. Yishmael: Since it is written in the Torah "garments," generically, and the Torah specified in one instance [in respect to plague-spots] wool and linen, we deduce: Just as there, wool and linen, so, in all instances [of "garment"], wool and linen [is intended] (*Ibid.* 39b).¹¹²

on the corners of their garments - It was taught: R. Gidel said in the name of Rav: *Tzitzith* must hang over the corner itself, as it is written: "on the corners of their garments" (*Ibid.*, 42a).¹¹³

on the corners of their garments - "their garments" — to include garments owned in common (Chullin 136a).114

on the tzitzith of the corner - It was taught: When he begins [attaching the tzitzith], he begins with the white. Why so? "the corner" [The tzitzith he begins with are to be] of the same type as the corner [and most garments are of linen as are the white tzitzith]. And when he finishes, he finishes with the white. Why so? "One rises in holiness, but does not descend" [i.e., the white, being "first" in significance, is also to conclude the process] (Menachoth 39a).115

on the tzitzith of the corner - Rava asked: It is written: "the corner"—
of the same type as the corner [implying that the tzitzith must be of the
same type as the corner of the garment], and it is written [that the
tzitzith must be] (Deuteronomy 22:11): [only] "wool and linen
together"! How is this to be reconciled? Wool and linen satisfy the
requirement of tzitzith both in garments of their kind and in other
garments; the other varieties satisfy the requirement only in garments of
their kind, but not in others (Ibid. b). 116,117

a string of blue [techeleth] - "Techeleth" is wool. Whence is this derived? Since "shesh" [in respect to the priestly garments] is linen, "techeleth" must be wool (Yevamoth 4b). 118

15:39 And it shall be for you tzitzith, and you shall see it, and you shall remember all the mitzvoth of the L-rd, and you

shall do them, and you shall not go astray after your hearts and after your eyes, after which you stray.

and you shall see it - The [absence of] the blue string does not invalidate the white [from sufficing for the mitzvah] and the white does not invalidate the blue, it being written: "and you shall see it" [and not "them"] (Menachoth 38a).¹¹⁹

and you shall see it - to exclude a night garment, [which is not "seen"] (*Ibid.* 43a). 120

and you shall see "otho" - It was taught: R. Shimon b. Yochai says: All who are diligent in the performance of this mitzvah [of tzitzith] merit beholding the face of the Shechinah, it being written here: "and you shall see otho," and, elsewhere (Deuteronomy 10:20): "The L-rd your G-d shall you fear; otho [Him] shall you serve" (Menachoth 43b). 121

and you shall see "otho" - It was taught in the name of R. Meir: It is not written: "and you shall see them" [i.e., the tzitzith], but: "and you shall see otho" [i.e., "Him"]: This teaches us that fulfilling the mitzvah of tzitzith is comparable to beholding the face of the Shechinah. For techeleth is reminiscent of [the color of] the sea; the sea, of grass; grass, of the firmament: and the firmament, of the Throne of Glory (Yerushalmi Berachoth 1:2).122

and you shall see "otho" - It was taught: Others say: "and you shall see otho" ["him"]: [The beginning of the time for the recitation of the morning Shema is] that time when one can recognize his neighbor at a distance of four ells (Ibid.).¹²³

and you shall see it, and you shall remember - It was taught: "and you shall see it, and you shall remember" — See this mitzvah [i.e., tzitzith] and remember another mitzvah that is contingent upon it. Which is that? The recitation of the Shema; as it was taught: From what time may one recite the Shema in the morning? From the time that he can differentiate between the blue and the white [of the tzitzith] (Menachoth 43b). 124

and you shall see it, and you shall remember - It was also taught: "and you shall see it, and you shall remember"— See this *mitzvah* and remember another *mitzvah* which is adjacent to it [in Scripture], viz.

that of kilaim [forbidden admixtures], as it is written (Deuteronomy 22:11,12): "You shall not wear sha'atnez, wool and linen together. Fringes shall you make for yourself" (Ibid.). 125

and you shall see, and you shall remember, and you shall do - It was taught: "and you shall see it, and you shall remember all the *mitzvoth* of the L-rd, and you shall do them": This teaches us that seeing leads to remembering; and remembering, to doing (*Ibid*.).¹²⁶

and you shall remember all the *mitzvoth* of the L-rd - It was taught: The section of *tzitzith* includes "the yoke of *mitzvoth*," as it is written: "and you shall see it, and you shall remember all the *mitzvoth* of the L-rd" (*Berachoth* 12b).¹²⁷

and you shall remember all the *mitzvoth* of the L-rd - It was taught: "and you shall see it, and you shall remember all the *mitzvoth* of the L-rd" — Once one is bound by this *mitzvah*, he is bound by all the *mitzvoth* of the Torah (*Menachoth* 43b).¹²⁸

and you shall remember all the *mitzvoth* of the L-rd - It was taught: "and you shall see it, and you shall remember all the *mitzvoth* of the L-rd": From here it is derived that this *mitzvah* is equivalent to all of the *mitzvoth* of the Torah (*Ibid*.).¹²⁹

and you shall not go astray after your hearts - From here Rebbi derived: Let a man not drink from one goblet while gazing at another [i.e., Let him not think of another woman during union with his wife] (Nedarim 20b).¹³⁰

and you shall not go astray after your hearts - It was taught: Why are these three sections [of the *Shema*] recited every day? R. Levi said: Because the Ten Commandments are alluded to in them: "Thou shalt not commit adultery" — "and you shall not go astray after you hearts and after your eyes" (Yerushalmi Berachoth 1:5). 131

after your hearts and after your eyes - It was taught: "after your hearts" — this is heresy; and so it is written (*Psalms* 14:1): "The profligate has said in his heart: There is no G-d"; "and after your eyes" — this refers to lewd thoughts, as it is written (*Judges* 14:3): "And Samson said: ... Take her for me, for she is righteous in my eyes": "after which you stray" — this refers to thoughts of idolatry; and so it is

written (8:33): "and they strayed after the ba'alim" (Berachoth 12b). 132-134

after your hearts and after your eyes - It was taught: R. Levi said: The heart and the eye are the two agents of sin, as it is written (*Proverbs* 23:26): "Give, my son, your heart to Me, and your eyes shall heed My ways." The Holy One Blessed be He is saying, in effect: If you give Me your heart and your eyes, I know that you are Mine (*Yerushalmi Berachoth* 1:5).¹³⁵

after your hearts and after your eyes - This teaches us that the eyes follow the heart. But may it not be that the heart follows the eyes! Can you say so? Are there not blind men who perform all the abominations in the world! (Sifrei). 136

15:40 So that you remember and do all of My *mitzvoth*; and you shall be holy to your G-d.

So that you remember - It was taught: Why are these three sections recited every day? R. Levi said: Because the Ten Commandments are alluded to in them: "Remember the Sabbath day" — "So that you remember," concerning which Rebbi said: This alludes to the *mitzvah* of Sabbath, which is equivalent to all of the *mitzvoth* of the Torah (Yerushalmi Berachoth 1:5).¹³⁷

15:41 I am the L-rd, your G-d, who took you out of the land of Egypt to be to you as a G-d; I am the L-rd, your G-d.

I am the L-rd your G-d - This is written twice, the connotation being: I am He who will exact payment [for transgression], and I am He who will reward [for mitzvoth] (Menachoth 44a).¹³⁸

I am the L-rd your G-d - It was taught: Why are these three sections recited every day? R. Levi said: Because the Ten Commandements are alluded to in them: "Do not testify falsely against your neighbor" — "I [the G-d of Truth] am the L-rd your G-d," as it is written (Jeremiah 10:10): "And the L-rd, G-d, is true" (Yerushalmi Berachoth 1:5). 139

who took you out, etc. - Rava said: Why does Scripture juxtapose the

exodus from Egypt with the *mitzvah* of *tzitzith*? The Holy One Blessed be He is saying, in effect: I, who distinguished in Egypt between the drop of a first-born and the drop of a non first-born — I am He who is destined to exact payment from him who attaches *kala ilan* [imitation-dyed] threads to his garment and claims them to be *techeleth* (*Bava Metzia* 61b).^{140,141}

Korach

16:1 And Korach the son of Yitzhar, the son of Kehoth, the son of Levi took, and Dathan and Aviram the sons of Eliav, and On the son of Peleth, the sons of Reuven,

And Korach took - What is the intent of: "and he took"? Resh Lakish said: He took a bad "taking" for himself (Sanhedrin 109b).

Korach the son of Yitzhar, etc. - Resh Lakish said: "Korach" — He created a bald spot [karchah] in Israel [i.e., a great part of the population was destroyed because of him]; "the son of Yitzhar" — he aroused everyone to his cause as [glaringly as] the afternoon [tzaharaim]; "the son of Kehoth" — the son who dulled [hikhah] the teeth of his progenitors; "the son of Levi" — the son who brought a cortege [levayah] of his followers to Gehinnom (Ibid.).

and Dathan and Aviram - Resh Lakish said: "Dathan" — he transgressed the Almighty's Law [da'ath Kel]; "Aviram" — he steeled himself [iber atzmo] against repentance (Ibid.).

and On the son of Peleth, etc. - Resh Lakish said: "On" — he sat in mourning [aninuth; i.e., he repented for having joined Korach's party]; "the son of Peleth" — the son for whom wonders [pelaoth] were done [i.e., he was granted the "wonder" of atonement]; "the son of Reuven" — the son who saw [ra'ah] and understood [hevin (the evil of his ways)] (Ibid.).4

16:2 And they arose before Moses, and men of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty, the leaders of the congregation, designates of the times, people of name.

the leaders of the congregation, etc. - "the leaders of the congregation"
— the select of the congregation; "designates of the times" —

knowledgeable in intercalating years and determining the New Moon; "people of name" — famous throughout the world (*Ibid.* 110a).⁵

16:4 And Moses heard, and he fell on his face.

And Moses heard - What did he hear? R. Shmuel b. Nachmani said in the name of R. Yonathan: He heard that they suspected him of adultery, as it is written (*Psalms* 106:16): "And they forewarned concerning Moses in the camp" — This teaches us that everyone forewarned his wife against [closeting herself with] Moses; to wit (*Exodus* 33:7): "And Moses took the tent and pitched it outside the camp" (*Ibid.*).6

16:7 And put fire in them, and put incense in them before the L-rd tomorrow. And it shall be, the man whom the L-rd chooses; he shall be holy. This is too much for you, sons of Levi.

This is too much for you, sons of Levi - It was taught: R. Levi said: He retorted with: "too much" — he was retorted to with: "too much." He retorted with too much: "This is too much for you" — he was retorted to with: "too much" (*Deuteronomy* 3:26): "And the L-rd said to me: This is too much for you" (*Sotah* 13b).

16:12 And Moses sent to call to Dathan and to Aviram, the sons of Eliav; and they said: We shall not go up.

And Moses sent to call - Rava said: Whence is it derived that beth-din sends bailiffs to summon one to court? From: "And Moses sent to call to Dathan and to Aviram" (Moed Katan 16a).8

16:14 Nor to a land of milk and honey did you bring us, nor give us inheritance of field and vineyard. Even if you gouge out the eyes of those men, we shall not go up.

Even if you gouge out the eyes, etc. - Rava said: Whence is it derived that if the one summoned to court is abusive to the bailiff and the latter

reports it, it is not considered slander? From: "Even if you gouge out the eyes" [which, apparently, was reported by Moses' bailiffs] (*Ibid.*).9

16:15 And Moses was greatly wroth, and he said to the L-rd: Do not turn to their offering. Not one ass of theirs have I taken, and I have not injured one of them.

Not one ass - The Rabbis taught: Once, King Ptolemy assembled seventy-two sages in seventy-two separate chambers, telling each one: "Transcribe for me the Torah of Moses your master." The Holy One Blessed be He placed goodly counsel in the heart of each, and they all wrote as one: "Not one desirable object of theirs have I taken" [this preventing Ptolemy from contending that it was only an ass that he did not take] (Megillah 9a).¹⁰

Not one ass of theirs have I taken - R. Yochanan said: Moses our teacher was very wealthy. For it is written: "Not one ass of theirs have I taken." If without pay, this is obvious. It must be, then, even with pay [i.e., Moses had so many of his own that he never needed those of another] (Nedarim 38a).¹¹

16:16 And Moses said to Korach: You, and all your congregation, present yourselves before the L-rd: you, and they, and Aaron tomorrow.

And Moses said to Korach - Rava said: Whence is it derived that one is summoned to the beth-din? From: "And Moses said to Korach: You, and all your congregation, present yourselves before the L-rd." And whence is it derived that the summons is [so worded as to instruct one to appear] before the highest of the judges? From: "before the L-rd." And whence is it derived that one must be summoned by name? From: "you, and they, and Aaron." And whence is it derived that a time must be specified? From: "tomorrow" (Moed Katan 16a). 12-15

16:21 Separate yourselves from the midst of this congregation, and I shall consume them in an instant.

from the midst of this congregation - See commentary on 14:27

16:25 And Moses arose and he went to Dathan and Aviram, and the elders of Israel went after him.

And Moses arose and he went - R. Ashi said: This teaches us that one must not "cling" to a quarrel (Sanhedrin 110a).¹⁶

16:26 And he spoke to the congregation, saying: Depart, now, from the tents of these wicked men, and do not touch anything that is theirs, lest you be consumed in all of their sins.

Depart, now, etc. - The Rabbis taught: One who elects to take an oath is told: Be it known to you that the entire world trembled when the Holy One Blessed be He said to Moses on Sinai (*Exodus* 19:7): "Do not take the name of the L-rd, your G-d, in vain." And if he persists in his resolve to swear, those standing there say to one another: "Depart, now, from the tents of these wicked men" (*Shevuoth* 39a).¹⁷

16:29 If as all men, these die; if as the visitation of every man it be visited upon them, then the L-rd has not sent me.

If as, etc. - Resh Lakish said: Where is the *mitzvah* of visiting the sick alluded to in the Torah? In: "If as all men, these die" — [as all men] who are sick and confined to their beds and visited by others (*Nedarim* 39b).¹⁸

16:30 But if a creation be created by the L-rd, and the earth open up its mouth and swallow them and all that is theirs, and they descend, living, to Sheol — then you will know that these men have rebelled against the L-rd.

But if a creation be created by the L-rd - Rava expounded: Moses said before the Holy One Blessed be He: L-rd of the Universe — if you have already created Gehinnom, good; if not, "let the L-rd create it." How is

this to be understood? If, literally, as "creation," "there is nothing new under the sun!" [i.e., G-d, after the primal creation, does not create anything new]. It is to be understood, then, as [a request for] the lifting of the opening of Gehinnom [to the surface of the earth, to swallow them up] (Sanhedrin 110a).¹⁹

But if a creation be created by the L-rd - R. Shimon b. Lakish said: Three cast doubt upon their prophecy because of uncertainty [as to whether it would be filfilled]: Moses, Elijah, and Micha. Moses said: "But if a creation be created by the L-rd" [implying uncertainty that such a creation would, indeed, be forthcoming] (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 10:1).^{20,21}

16:32 And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up them and their houses, and all the men that were with Korach, and all the wealth.

And the earth opened its mouth - It was taught: R. Yehudah the son of R. Chiyya said: From the day the earth opened its mouth to receive Hevel's blood, it never opened it again. Chizkiah asked: But is it not written: "And the earth opened its mouth"? He answered: For evil, it opened its mouth; for good, not (Sanhedrin 37b).^{22,23}

that were with Korach - R. Yochanan said: Korach was not among those swallowed up or those consumed by fire. He was not among those swallowed up, it being written: "and all the men that were with Korach" — but not Korach himself. And he was not among those consumed by fire, it being written (26:10): "when the fire consumed the two hundred and fifty men" — but not Korach himself. In a baraithah it was taught: Korach was among those consumed by fire and among those swallowed up. He was among those swallowed up, it being written: "and swallowed up them" — including Korach. And he was among those consumed by fire, it being written (35): "And a fire came forth from the L-rd and consumed the two hundred and fifty men" — Korach among them (1bid. 110a).²⁴

16:33 And they went down, and all that belonged to them,

living, to Sheol. And the earth covered them up, and they were lost from the midst of the congregation.

And they went down, etc. - R. Yirmiah b. Elazar said: There are three openings to Gehinnom: one in the desert, one in the sea, and one in Jerusalem. In the desert, as it is written: "And they went down, and all that belonged to them, living, to Sheol" (*Eruvin* 19a).^{25,26}

and all that belonged to them - R. Berachiah said in the name of R. Chelbo: Even their names fled from [the place of their engravement on] their treasures. R. Yossi b. R. Chanina said: Even a needle that another Jew had borrowed from them was swallowed up with them, as it is written: "And they went down, and all that belonged to them, living, to Sheol" (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 10:1).^{27,28}

And the earth covered them up - R. Akiva says: The congregation of Korach is not destined to ascend, as it is written: "And the earth covered them up" — in this world, "and they were lost from the midst of the congregation" — in the next world. R. Eliezer says [in disagreement with the above]: About them Scripture writes (I Samuel 2:6): "The L-rd puts to death, and brings to life; brings down to Sheol, and brings up" (Sanhedrin 108a).²⁹

and they were lost from the midst of the congregation - It was taught: R. Yehudah b. Betheirah says: It is written (*Psalms* 1,19:176): "I have strayed, as a lost sheep; seek out Your servant." Just as there, what was *lost* is destined to be sought out; here, too, what was *lost* is destined to be sought out [and they will inherit the world to come] (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 10:4).³⁰

17:3 The censers of these sinners with their souls, and let them make them into beaten plates as a covering for the altar; for they offered them before the L-rd, and they have become consecrated. And let them be as a sign for the children of Israel.

these sinners with their souls - What is the intent of: "with their souls"? Their souls were burned and their bodies remained intact (Sanhedrin 52a).1

these sinners with their souls - "with their souls": They incurred the penalty of burning because of the perverseness of their souls, as per Resh Lakish, who said: (*Psalms* 35:16): "Because of the flattery of the quaffing of a draught, he has ground his teeth against me" — Because of the flattery they accorded Korach for the drinks that he plied them with, the plenipotentiary of Gehinnom ground his teeth against them (*Ibid.*).^{2,3}

a covering for the altar, etc. - It was taught: Whence is it derived that ascents [and not descents] are to be made in holiness? R. Acha b. Yaakov said: From: "And let them make them into beaten plates as a covering for the altar; for they offered them before the L-rd, and they have become consecrated. And let them be as a sign for the children of Israel" — In the beginning they were accessory to the altar, and now they were to be part and parcel of the altar (Menachoth 99a). 4.5

17:5 A memorial for the children of Israel, that no stranger, who is not of the seed of Aaron come near to offer incense before the Lrd. And let him not be as Korach and as his congregation, as the L-rd spoke by the hand of Moses to him.

And let him not be as Korach - Rav said: All who nurture a quarrel transgress a negative commandment, viz.: "And let him not be as Korach and as his congregation." R. Ashi said: They deserve leprosy, it being written here: "as the L-rd spoke by the hand of Moses to him," and elsewhere (Exodus 4:6): "And the L-rd said to him: Put your hand into your bosom" [and when he drew it out, it was leprous] (Sanhedrin 110a).6

17:12 And Aaron took as Moses commanded and he ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague had begun among the people. And he administered the incense and he made atonement for the people.

And he administered the incense - R. Yehoshua b. Levi said: When Moses ascended to the heights, all of the angels became his lovers and

gave him gifts. And even the angel of death gave him a gift, as it is written: "And he administered the incense and he made atonement for the people," and: "And he stood between the dead and the living" ["and the plague stopped"]. If the angel of death did not tell him [the secret of stopping this death], how did he know? (Shabbath 89a).

and he made atonement for the people - R. Chanina taught: Whence is it derived that incense atones? From: "And he administered the incense and he made atonement for the people." And it was taught in the school of R. Yishmael: For what does the incense atone? For slander. Why is this so? Let a secret thing [the incense was offered in secret in the sanctuary] come and atone for a secret act [slander] (Zevachim 88b).8

17:25 And the L-rd said to Moses: Put back the rod of Aaron before the Testimony as a keeping, as a sign for the children of rebellion, that they end their murmurings against Me, and that they not die.

before the Testimony as a keeping - It was taught: When the ark was secreted, there were also secreted the receptacle of manna and the rod of Aaron. Whence is this derived? R. Elazar said: It is derived from: "keeping" [here] -"keeping", in respect to the receptacle of manna (Exodus 16:33). (Horiyoth 12a).9

18:2 And also your brothers, the tribe of Levi, the tribe of your father, draw near with you, and let them be joined to you and serve you; and you and your sons with you, before the tent of the Testimony.

and let them be joined to you and serve you. The Rabbis taught: "and let them be joined to you and serve you." Is Scripture speaking of [their joining you, the priests, in] your service [of guarding the Temple precincts] or in their service [singing and carrying the tabernacle]? "And they will join you and they will keep" (4) already speaks of their service. How, then, is: "and let them be joined to you and serve you" to be understood? As referring to your service [of guarding]. How is this effected? The priests guard above, and the Levites below (Tamid 26b).

18:3 And they will keep your charge and the charge of all the tent. But to all the vessels of the sanctuary and to the altar they shall not come near, so that they not die; both they and you.

both they and you - It was taught: Whence is the institution of Levitical singing [during the offering of the sacrifices] Scripturally derived? R. Yonathan said: From: "so that they not die; both they and you" — just as you [the priests] at the altar service, so they [the Levites] at the altar service [i.e., singing] (Erchin 11a).²

both they and you - It was taught: "so that they not die; both they and you." You [the priests] infringing upon theirs [i.e., the Levites' service], and they infringing upon yours — subject to death; they infringing upon theirs [i.e., assuming the function of their fellow Levite] — in violation of an exhortation (*Ibid.*).³

18:4 And they will join you and they will keep the charge of the tent of meeting, and a stranger shall not draw near to you.

and a stranger shall not draw near to you - It was taught: Whence is derived the exhortation against a non-priest's approaching the priestly service? From: "and a stranger shall not draw near to you" (Zevachim 16a).4

18:5 And you shall keep the charge of the sanctuary and there shall no more be wrath against the children of Israel.

And you shall keep the charge of the sanctuary - This is an exhortation to beth-din to exhort the priests in the proper ordering of the service; for when the priestly service is properly ordered, evil is kept from befalling the world (Sifrei).⁵

and there shall no more be wrath - What is the intent of "no more"? He did vent His wrath before, as it is written (17:11): "for the wrath has gone forth" (*Ibid.*).6

18:6 And I, behold, I have taken your brothers, the Levites, from the midst of the children of Israel, for you as a gift, given to the L-rd, to perform the service of the tent of meeting.

given to the L-rd, to perform - "to the L-rd" they are given, and not to the priests [for their personal service] (*Ibid.*).

18:7 And you and your sons with you shall guard your priesthood for all things of the altar and inside the veil; and you shall serve a service of gift. I shall establish your priesthood; and the stranger who draws near shall be put to death.

you shall guard your priesthood - I might think even so far as slaughtering is concerned [i.e., that this, too, must be performed by the priest]; it is, therefore, written (*Leviticus* 1:5): "And he shall slaughter the bullock before the L-rd, and the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall bring the blood near" — The *mitzvah* of the priestly service commences from the receiving of the blood (*Yoma* 27a).

and you shall serve a service of gift - If [it were written only:] "and you shall serve," I might think [even] indiscriminately [i.e., whenever you desired]; it is, therefore, written: "a service of gift" — Just as [the receiving of the priestly gifts] is decided by lots, so the order of service [at the altar] is decided by lots (Sifrei).9

a service of gift - It was taught: R. Shimon b. Lakish said: A non-priest who lifted [the ashes] from the altar is not liable. Why so? For it is written: "and you shall serve a service of gift" [i.e., "giving"] — to exclude that which is [a service of] lifting (Yerushalmi Yoma 2:1).10

and the stranger who draws near shall be put to death - Rav said: For sprinkling the blood, smoking the incense, pouring the water and pouring the wine, a non-priest incurs the death penalty. Whence is this derived? From: "And you and your sons with you shall guard your priesthood for all things of the altar and inside the veil; and you shall serve a service of gift ... and the stranger who draws near shall be put to

death" — a service of gift, and not one of removal [of the ashes (see above)]. "and you shall serve" — a complete service, and not one which requires another service to complete it. "for all things of the altar" — to include the seven sprinklings within [the sanctuary] and those of the leper [from the log of oil] (Yoma 24a).¹¹⁻¹³

and the stranger who draws near shall be put to death - See commentary on 1:51

and the stranger who draws near shall be put to death -From here it is derived tht a non-priest who served in the sanctuary is subject to the death penalty (Sanhedrin 83b).¹⁴

and the stranger who draws near shall be put to death - It was taught: R. Yishmael says: It is written here: "and the stranger who draws near shall be put to death," and, elsewhere (17:28): "Everyone who draws near the tabernacle of the L-rd dies" — Just as there, at the hands of Heaven; here, too, at the hands of Heaven (*Ibid.* 84a).¹⁵

18:8 And the L-rd spoke to Aaron: And I, behold, I have given to you the charge of My heave-offerings [terumah] of all the hallowed things of the children of Israel. To you have I given them for greatness and to your children as an everlasting statute.

behold, I have given to you - "to you" shall it be, even to kindle it [unclean terumah] under your pot (Shabbath 25a).16

the charge of My terumoth - Scripture here speaks of two terumoth: one, clean; the other, unclean (Ibid.).¹⁷

the charge of My terumoth - The Rabbis taught: One may not kindle a fire with unclean tevel [that from which terumah has not yet been taken] on a weekday, and, it goes without saying, on the Sabbath, it being written: "the charge of My terumoth": Scripture here speaks of two terumoth: one, clean; the other, unclean. Just as clean terumah is permitted only after it has been removed [from a state of tevel], so, unclean terumah is permitted only after it has been removed (lbid. 26a).18

the charge of My terumoth - From here it is derived that it is forbidden to cause *terumah* to become unclean or to depreciate (Rashi on *Succah* 35b).¹⁹

the charge of My terumoth - Scripture here speaks of two *terumoth*: one, clean; the other, doubtful [as to whether it is clean or unclean], guarding [against positive uncleanliness] being mandated, nonetheless (*Bechoroth* 34a).²⁰

the charge of My terumoth - It was taught: R. Yossi says in the name of R. Hila: By right, one would be allowed by Scripture to render his tevel unclean, it being written: "the charge of My terumah" — terumah requires guarding [against uncleanliness], and not tevel. But how do I construe (28): "and you shall give of it the terumah of the L-rd to Aaron the priest"? Guard it [the tevel] so that it [the terumah] can be given to Aaron the priest [for eating] in his priesthood [i.e., in a state of cleanliness] (Yerushalmi Challah 3:2).²¹

the charge of My terumoth - Terumah and bikkurim [first-fruits] subject one who eats them in a state of uncleanliness to the death penalty, it being written: "the charge of My terumoth" — two terumoth [clean and unclean]; and in respect to terumah it is written (Leviticus 22:9): "and they shall not bear sin because of it, and die for it." And bikkurim, too, are called "terumah," as it was taught: (Deuteronomy 12:17): "and the terumah of your hand" — these are bikkurim, as it is written (Deuteronomy 26:4): "and the priest shall take the basket from your hand" (Yerushalmi Bikkurim 2:1).²²

To you have I given them for greatness - Priests are permitted to eat hallowed food roasted, boiled, or cooked along with spices of *chullin* [non-consecrated food], it being written: "To you have I given them for greatness" — for greatness, as the kings eat [i.e., in whichever manner they wish] (Zevachim 91a).²³

To you have I given them for greatness - R. Chisda said: The priestly gifts are eaten only roasted and only with mustard, it being written: "for greatness" — for greatness, as the kings eat (Chullin 132b).²⁴

To you have I given them for greatness - Terumah and bikkurim are the property of the priest. Terumah, as it is written: "To you have I given

them lemashchah [(lit., "for anointing")] — for greatness [see above], for anointing, rubbing, and kindling. And bikkurim, too, are called "terumah," as it was taught: (Deuteronomy 12:17): "and the terumah of your hand" — these are bikkurim, as it is written (Deuteronomy 26:4): "and the priest shall take the basket from your hand" (Yerushalmi Bikkurim 2:1).^{25,26}

18:9 This shall be to you from the holy of holies, from the fire. All of their offerings of all of their meal-offerings, which they shall return to Me are holy of holies to you and to your sons.

from the fire - It was taught: R. Yossi says: If a priest betrothed a woman with his portion, both of the lower-order offerings or of the higher-order offerings, she is not betrothed, it being written: "This shall be to you from the holy of holies, from the fire" — as the fire, viz.: just as the fire is for [the purpose of future] eating; here, too, [the gifts are] for eating [and not for betrothing] (Kiddushin 52b).²⁷

All of their offerings - to include the log of oil of the leper. I might think that Scripture intended "from the fire," specifically; it is, therefore, written: ["All of their offerings"] (Menachoth 73a).²⁸

of all of their meal-offerings - to include the meal-offerings of the omer and the meal-offering of rancor [of the sotah]. I might think that Scripture intended specifically (Exodus 29:33): "And they shall eat those things with which atonement was made," and these are [not for atonement, but] for, [respectively,] permitting [the new crop] and ascertaining [innocence or guilt]; it is, therefore, written: ["of all their meal-offerings"] (Ibid.).29

and all of their sin-offerings - to include the guilt-offering of fowl. I might think it were *neveilah* [carcass (since it was killed by *melikah* [pinching] and not by *shechitah*)]; it is, therefore, written: ["and all of their sin-offerings"] (*Ibid.*).³⁰

and all of their guilt-offerings - to include the guilt-offering of the Nazirite [for eating by the priest] just as the guilt-offering of the leper. I might think [that it was not eaten] since it served only the purpose of

reassumption [of the Naziritic state, and not that of atonement]; it is, therefore, written: ["and all of their guilt-offerings"] (Ibid.).³¹

which they shall return - This refers to [the guilt-offering for] theft of a convert [see 5:8] (*Ibid.*).³²

to you and to your sons - It is yours and your sons' — even to betroth a woman therewith (*Ibid.*).³³

18:10 In the holy of holies shall you eat it. Every male shall eat it; holy shall it be to you.

In the holy of holies shall you eat it - It was taught: R. Yehudah b. Betheira says: Whence is it derived that if a gentile army surrounded the entire *azarah* [the Temple court] the priests enter the holy of holies and eat there the higher-order offerings and the remnants of the meal-offerings? From: "In the holy of holies shall you eat it" (*Zevachim* 63a).³⁴

every male shall eat it - This teaches us about the communal peace-offerings that they are eaten only by the males of the priesthood (*Ibid*. 97b).³⁵

18:11 And this is for you the offering of their gift, for all the wave-offerings of the children of Israel, to you have I given them, and to your sons and to your daughters with you as an everlasting statute; every clean one in your household shall eat of it.

And this is for you, etc. - Scripture hereby teaches us that just as the higher-order offerings served to effect a covenant [between the L-rd and the priests], so, the lower-order offerings (Sifrei).³⁶

18:12 All the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine, and of the wheat; the first of them which they shall give to the L-rd, to you have I given them.

All the best of the oil - And it is written: "and all the best of the wine and of the wheat." Scripture hereby states: Give the best for one and the best for the other — whereby we are taught that *terumah* is not given from one species on behalf of another. We find this to be so vis à vis wine and oil [a different "best" applying to each], but where do we find it to be so vis à vis wine and wheat or vis à vis one kind of grain and another? Abbaye answered: It is written: "the first of *them*" [i.e., the "first" (*terumah*) must come from "them", the same grain for which it is being given] (*Bechoroth* 53b, 54b).^{37,38}

and all the best of the wine and of the wheat - Wheat is being compared to wine. Just as with wine and wheat, which are two different plant products, *terumah* and *ma'aser* are not taken from one for the other, so, with two different kinds of grain or two different kinds of produce, *terumah* and *ma'aser* are not taken from one for the other (*Yerushalmi Terumoth* 2:4).³⁹

18:13 The first-fruits of all that is in their land, that they bring to the L-rd, for you shall it be. Every clean one of your household shall eat it.

The first-fruits of all that is in their land - It was taught: Whence is it derived that the [presentation of] the two loaves of bread precedes the [offering of] the first-fruits? From (Exodus 34:22): "And the festival of Shevuoth [i.e., what you present on the festival of Shevuoth, the two loaves] shall you make for yourself [(followed by)] the first-fruits of the harvest of the wheat." And whence is it derived that this includes [first-fruits planted] on a roof, in a ruin, in a pot, or on a boat? From: "The first-fruits of all that is in their land" (Menachoth 84b). 40,41

The first-fruits of all that is in their land - It was taught: "First-fruits" are so termed when they are yet attached to the soil, it being written: "The first fruits of all that is in their land" (Yerushalmi Bikkurim 2:3). 42

The first-fruits of all that is in their land - This ["all"] teaches us that one may make all of his field "first-fruits" (Ibid.).⁴³

that is in their land - "in their land" — to include land owned in partnership (Chullin 136a).44

Every clean one of your household - It was taught: The daughter of an Israelite betrothed to a priest may not eat of [his] terumah. Why so? For it is written: "Every clean one of your household shall eat it," and [in her betrothed state] she is not yet of his household (Yerushalmi Yevamoth 9:5).⁴⁵

18:14 Every devoted thing in Israel shall be yours.

Every devoted thing - It was taught: Devoted objects, as long as they are in the original owner's house, are considered consecrated objects in all respects, it being written (*Leviticus* 27:28): "All devoted objects are holy of holies to the L-rd." Once they have been given to the priest, however, they are as *chullin* [non-consecrated objects] in all respects, it being written: "Every devoted thing in Israel shall be yours" [the priest's, and not the L-rd's] (*Bechoroth* 32a).46

18:15 All that opens the womb of all flesh that they offer to the L-rd, in man and in beast, shall be yours; but redeem shall you redeem the first-born of the man, and the first-born of the unclean beast shall you redeem.

of all flesh that they offer - If [it were written only] "of all flesh," I would think that even animals [and not only beasts] were included; it is, therefore, written: "that they offer" [animals not being offered as sacrifices]. And if [it were written only] "that they offer," I would think that blemished animals were excluded; it is, therefore, written: "in man and in beast," to include those that are blemished (Sifrei). 47

shall be yours - If one sets aside his son's redemption money and it is lost, he must make restitution, it being written: "shall be yours ... redeem you shall redeem" [i.e., he is redeemed only when the money has become yours (the priest's)] (Bechoroth 51a).⁴⁸

but redeem shall you redeem - Rammi b. Chamma taught: Since it is written: "redeem shall you redeem the first-born of the man," I would think that this applied even if he were killed within the first thirty days; it is, therefore, written: "but," to stipulate this reservation (Bava Kamma 11b).⁴⁹

redeem shall you redeem - It was taught: The father must redeem his son. If the father did not do so, the son must redeem himself, it being written [twice]: "redeem shall you redeem" (Kiddushin 29a).50

redeem shall you redeem - A woman is not obliged to redeem her son, it being written: "redeem shall you redeem": Whoever is obliged to redeem himself, is obliged to redeem others; whoever is not obliged to redeem himself, is not obliged to redeem others (*Ibid.*).⁵¹

redeem shall you redeem - A woman is not obliged to redeem herself, it being written: "redeem shall you redeem": One whom others are obliged to redeem is obliged to redeem himself; one whom others are not obliged to redeem is not obliged to redeem himself (*Ibid.*).⁵²

the first-born of the man, etc. - The asses of priests and Levites are not subject to the law of the first-born, it being written: "but redeem shall you redeem the first-born of the man, and the first-born of the unclean beast shall you redeem." All who are subject to the law of the first-born of the man are subject to the law of the first-born of the unclean beast [i.e., the ass]; and priests and Levites, since they are not subject to the law of the first-born of the man, are not subject to the law of the first-born of the unclean beast (Bechoroth 4a).⁵³

the first-born of the man, etc. - Whence is it derived that through the sheep of a Levite the first-born of the asses of an Israelite were exempt from the law of the first-born? From: "but redeem shall you redeem the first-born of the man, and the first-born of the unclean beast shall you redeem." Just as with the first-born of the man, no distinction was made between future generations and the moment [i.e., in the desert] — [redemption being] with money; so with the first-born of an unclean beast, no distinction was made between future generations and the moment — [redemption being] with a sheep, [a Levite sheep redeeming such a first-born in the desert] (*Ibid.* b).⁵⁴

and the first-born of the unclean beast - I might think that the first-born of horses and camels were also included; it is, therefore, written (*Exodus* 13:13): "the first-born of an ass", (*Exodus* 34:20): "the first-born of an ass", — to stipulate only the first-born of an ass, and not the first-born of horses or camels (*Ibid.* 5b).⁵⁵

shall you redeem - Why, again, "shall you redeem"? To teach that it must be redeemed immediately [unlike the first-born of a man, which is redeemed after thirty days] (Sifrei).⁵⁶

18:16 And his redemption, from one month shall you redeem, according to your monetary valuation, five shekalim in the shekel of the sanctuary; it is twenty gerah.

And his redemption from one month - It was taught: R. Shimon b. Gamliel says: Whatever survives thirty days in human beings is not considered a miscarriage, it being written: "and his redemption from one month shall you redeem" (Shabbath 135b).⁵⁷

And his redemption from one month - If his son died within thirty days, though he has already given his redemption money to the priest, it must be returned. Whence is this derived? "month" [here] - "month" [in respect to the counting of the Jews in] the desert. Just as there, from one month and above; here, too, from one month and above (Bechoroth 49a).58

And his redemption from one month, etc. - One redeems neither with servants, nor with bills, nor with land [but only with money]. Whence is this derived? By way of "general-particular." "And his redemption from one month" — general; "according to your monetary valuation, five shekalim" — particular"; "shall you redeem" — reversion to the general. "General-particular-general," in which instance the general partakes of the nature of the particular, viz.: Just as the particular is movable and of monetary worth in itself [i.e., in its substance], so, all that is movable and of monetary worth in itself. This excludes: land, which is not movable; servants, which are likened to land; and bills, which are not of monetary worth in themselves (*Ibid.* 51a). 59,60

it is twenty gerah - It was taught (Exodus 27:25): "twenty gerah, the shekel" — This teaches us that the shekel is twenty gerah. And whence is it derived that if he wishes to increase the amount he may do so? From (Leviticus 27:25): "Twenty gerah shall be the shekel." I might think that he could also decrease the amount; it is, therfore, written: "it is twenty gerah" (Ibid. 50a).61

18:17 But the first-born of an ox, or the first-born of a sheep or the first-born of a goat, you shall not redeem. They are consecrated. Their blood shall you sprinkle upon the altar, and their fats shall you smoke, a fire-offering as a sweet sayor to the L-rd.

But the first-born of an ox, etc. - If a sheep bore a type of goat or a goat bore a type of sheep, the law of the first-born does not apply. But if there are some signs [of the mother in the offspring], it does apply, it being written: "But the first-born of an ox, or the first-born of a sheep, or the first-born of a goat": "the first-born of an ox" — it must be an ox and the first-born, an ox; "the first-born of a sheep" — it must be a sheep and the first-born, a sheep; "the first-born of a goat" — it must be a goat and the first-born, a goat. I might think that [the law of the first-born does not apply] even if there are some common features [between dam and offspring]; it is, therefore, written: "But" [to stipulate this reservation] (Ibid. 5b).62,63

But the first-born of an ox, etc. - It was taught: R. Yossi b. R. Chanina taught: Why were the devoted portions [i.e., "and their fats shall you smoke"] mentioned individually in respect to "the first-born of an ox, the first-born of a sheep, and the first-born of a goat"? For if Scripture had stated only: "the first-born of an ox," I might think that [only its devoted portions were offered] because of its additional libations [one-half of a hin, as opposed to one-quarter of a hin for the others]; "a sheep" — because of the offering of its tail [which does not obtain with the others]; "a goat" — because it is offered [and not the others] in an instance of individual [as opposed to communal] unwitting idolatry (Ibid.). 64,65

you shall not redeem - It was taught: In respect to a first-born, it is written: "you shall not redeem"; but if whole, it may be sold [by the priest] while it is alive [and if blemished, he may sell it alive or slaughtered, and he may betroth a woman with it] (*Ibid.* 31a).⁶⁶

They are consecrated - "They" are sacrificed, but not their substitutes, as it was taught: The substitute for a first-born and for ma'aser — they, their offspring, and the offspring of their offspring to the end of time are

in loco the first-born and ma'aser, and, [only] when blemished, may be eaten by the owners (Zevachim 37b).⁶⁷

They are consecrated - All consecrated animals may be redeemed [from their state of consecration, which is transferred to the object for which it is redeemed], and their substitutes, redeemed, except the first-born and ma'aser, it being written of them: "They are consecrated" — they are to remain in their state of consecration (Temurah 5b).⁶⁸

They are consecrated - This teaches us about the first-born and ma'aser, whose [sprinkled] blood became intermixed with that of any of the offerings, that they may be sacrificed upon the altar (*Ibid.*).⁶⁹

Their blood shall you sprinkle - And elsewhere it is written (Deuteronomy 12:27): "and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured upon the altar." If "pouring," why "sprinkling"; and if "sprinkling," why "pouring"? It was taught: "shall be poured" — and not dripped; "shall be poured" — and not flung; "shall be poured" — and not sprinkled! This was resolved in the Tradition (II Chronicles 30:16): "The priests sprinkled the blood, which they received from the hands of the Levites" [indicating clearly that the procedure for these sacrifices is sprinkling, and not pouring ("shall be poured" perforce pertaining to other types of sacrifices)] (Yerushalmi Pesachim 5:6).70,71

Their blood shall you sprinkle, etc. - One verse states: "Their blood shall you sprinkle ... and their fats shall you smoke ... and their flesh shall be for you," and another (*Leviticus* 17:6): "And the priest shall sprinkle the blood on the altar of the L-rd ... and he shall smoke the fats" [i.e., He sprinkles the blood even if, at the time of the sprinkling, there is no flesh to eat as opposed to the implication of the first verse)!] [The resolution is that] a prerequisite [for sprinkling] is either flesh for eating or devoted portions for smoking (*Ibid.* 7:5). 72

Their blood ... and their fats - It was taught: R. Yossi Haglili says: It is not written: "its blood and its fats," but "their blood and their fats," to teach that the first-born and tithes and the Pesach offering require the placing of blood and the devoted portions upon the altar (Pesachim 64b).⁷³

their blood ... and their fats - It was taught: R. Yishmael says: From: "But the first-born ... Their blood shall you sprinkle ... and their fats

shall you smoke," we derive that a first-born requires the placing of blood and the devoted portions upon the altar. Whence do we derive the same for tithes and the Pesach offering? From (*Deuteronomy* 12:27): "and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured" (*Zevachim* 37a)."

shall you sprinkle upon the altar - It is written here: "shall you sprinkle upon the altar," and, elsewhere (Leviticus 1:11): "and the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall sprinkle its blood upon the altar" — Just as there, the foundation of the altar is indicated; here, too, the foundation is required (Pesachim 64b).⁷⁵

18:18 And their flesh shall be for you; as the wave-breast and the right shoulder, for you shall it be.

And their flesh shall be for you - "And their flesh" — whether it be whole or blemished. This teaches us that a blemished first-born is given to the priest — the likes of which is not found in all of Scripture (Zevachim 37b).⁷⁶

And their flesh shall be for you - A priest who is not qualified to serve does not share in the meat. Whence is this derived? From: "Their blood shall you sprinkle ... and their fats shall you smoke ... and their flesh shall be for you" — Come, sprinkle, and eat! (*Ibid.* 112b).⁷⁷

as the wave-breast and the right shoulder - The Rabbis taught: Whence is it derived that the firstling is eaten for two days and one night? From: "And their flesh shall be for you as the wave-breast and the right shoulder." Scripture hereby likens it to the breast and the shoulder of peace-offerings, viz.: just as peace-offerings are eaten for two days and one night, so, the firstling (*Ibid.* 57a).⁷⁸

as the wave-breast, etc. - It was taught: Beth-Hillel say: Even non-priests may eat of the firstling. And though it is written: "And their flesh shall be for you as the wave-breast and the right shoulder," and there [in the instance of peace-offerings], only priests, and not Israelites may eat of it, this is true only of a whole animal; but in respect to a blemished one [i.e., a blemished firstling] it is written (*Deuteronomy* 16:22): "The unclean and the clean together" [may eat it] (*Bechoroth* 32b).⁷⁹⁻⁸¹

as the wave-breast, etc. - It was taught: Beth Hillel say: A firstling may be fed to menstruating women. And though it is written: "And their flesh shall be for you as the wave-breast and the right shoulder," and there [in the instance of peace-offerings], menstruating women may not eat of it, this is true only of a whole animal, but in respect to a blemished one [i.e., a blemished firstling] it is written (*Deuteronomy* 16:22): "The unclean and the clean together" may eat it (*Ibid.* 33a).⁸²

18:19 All the offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel will separate for the L-rd, have I given to you and to your sons and to your daughters with you as an everlasting statute. An eternal covenant of salt is it before the L-rd, for you and for your seed with you.

An eternal covenant of salt - See commentary on Leviticus 2:13

18:22 And the children of Israel shall no more draw near to the tent of meeting to bear sin, to die.

And they shall no more draw near, etc. - "And the children of Israel shall no more draw near" — this is an exhortation [gainst a non-Levite's performing a Levitical service]; "to bear sin, to die" — this is the punishment (Sifrei).83

18:24 For the tithe of the children of Israel which they shall separate for the L-rd as an offering have I given to the Levites as an inheritance. Therefore, have I said to them that in the midst of the children of Israel they shall not inherit an inheritance.

For the tithe, etc. - "For the tithe of the children of Israel which they shall separate for the L-rd as *terumah*": Scripture refers to it [ma'aser] as "terumah" — Just as [unseparated] terumah renders the produce "tevel" [a forbidden admixture], so, unseparated ma'aser rishon ["the first tithe"] (Yevamoth 86a).84

which they shall separate for the L-rd as terumah - Scripture refers to it as "terumah" until the Levite separates from it terumath ma'aser [i.e., ma'aser from the ma'aser]. Scripture hereby teaches us that if he [the Levite] wishes to declare it terumah for other [tevel] produce, he may do so (Sifrei).85,86

18:26 And to the Levites shall you speak, and you shall say to them: When you take from the children of Israel the ma'aser that I have given to you from them as your inheritance, then you shall separate from it terumah for the L-rd, ma'aser from the ma'aser.

And to the Levites shall you speak - The Rabbis taught: "Terumah" — to the priest; "the first ma'aser" — to the Levite. These are the words of R. Akiva. Whence is this derived? From: "And to the Levites shall you speak." Scripture speaks here of the Levites [and not of the priests] (Yevamoth 86b).87

from the children of Israel - It was taught: R. Yehoshua b. Levi said: Whence is it derived that if one [a Levite] acquires winnowed tevel from a gentile he need not separate terumath ma'aser? From: "And to the Levites shall you speak ... When you take from the children of Israel" — from the tevel that you acquire from the children of Israel, you separate terumath ma'aser; from the tevel that you acquire from gentiles you do not separate terumath ma'aser to give to the priest (Bechoroth 11b).88

from the children of Israel - It was taught: Though it was stated that ma'aser is not given to the priests [but to the Levites], still, his own is not taken from him [i.e., the priest need not give ma'aser to the Levite], it being written: "When you take from the children of Israel the ma'aser" — From the children of Israel you take it, but not from the associates of the priests and the Levites (Yerushalmi Ma'aser Sheni 5:3).89

from the children of Israel - From the children of Israel you take ma'aser, but not from gentiles (Ibid.).90

from them as your inheritance - It was taught: Ma'aser rishon is never interrupted [as is ma'aser sheni, but is taken every year], it being

written: "from them as your inheritance" — Just as an inheritance has no interruption, so, ma'aser rishon (Rosh Hashanah 12b).91

then you shall separate - This teaches us that *terumah* is not to be taken from what is separated for what is rooted, or from what is rooted for what is separated. And whence is it derived that *terumah* is not to be taken form fruits of the land for those outside the land, or from those outside the land for those of the land? From (*Leviticus* 27:30): "And all the *ma'aser* of the *land*" (*Sifrei*).92,93

then you shall separate from it - It was taught: Though it was ruled that *terumah* is not taken from the clean [produce] for the unclean, or from the unclean for the clean, this is so *ab initio*; but if it were *done*, the *terumah* is *terumah*. Whence is this derived? From: "from it" [Whatever it is, whether clean or unclean, the *terumah* is *terumah*] (Yerushalmi Terumoth 2:1).94

then you shall separate from it - This ["it"] teaches us that one should not take *terumah* from one kind of produce for another (Sifrei).95

ma'aser from the ma'aser - R. Shimon b. Lakish said: If a Levite took his "first ma'aser" while it was still in the stalk [i.e., before winnowing], he is not liable for "the great terumah" [for the priest], it being written: "then you shall separate from it terumah for the L-rd, ma'aser from the ma'aser" — only "ma'aser from the ma'aser," and not [both] terumah gedolah and terumath ma'aser from the ma'aser (Beitzah 13b). 96

18:27 And your *terumah* will be accounted for you as corn from the threshing-floor and as the fulness of the winepress.

And it will be accounted for you - It was taught in the name of R. Meir: "And your terumah will be accounted for you": One whom Scripture designates as "accounting" [i.e., "deliberating"] may separate terumah — whence it is derived that the terumah of a minor is not valid (Yerushalmi Terumoth 1:1).97

And it will be accounted for you - If one says: "the terumah of this pile is within it," or: "The terumath ma'aser of this pile is within it," it is not valid; but he must specify: "in its northern section" or "in its southern

section," it being written: "And your *Terumah* will be accounted for you," "and you shall give *terumah*" — Just as "accounting" is specific, so, the giving of *terumah* (*Ibid.* 3:3).98

And your terumah will be accounted for you - It was taught: Abba Elazar b. Gimmel says: Scripture here speaks of two terumoth: "the great terumah" [terumah gedolah] and terumath ma'aser. Therefore: just as terumah gedolah is taken by estimate and by "accounting" [see above] and by "a good eye" [i.e., open-handedly], so, terumath ma'aser; and just as the [original] owner is permitted to take terumah gedolah, so he is permitted to take terumath ma'aser [which he then gives to the Levite] (Gittin 30b, Menachoth 54b).99-101

and your terumah will be accounted for you - Terumah is taken neither by measure or weight or number, it being written: "and your terumah will be accounted for you" — it is by "accounting" [i.e., "mental assessment"] that you take terumah, and not by measure, weight, or number (Yerushalmi Terumoth 1:4).¹⁰²

your terumah - R. Avahu said: Wherever: "shall not eat" is written, both eating and the derivation of benefit are understood [to be forbidden]. But of terumah Scripture writes (Leviticus 22:10): "And no stranger shall eat of the consecrated things" and yet an eruv [a halachic demarcation of bounds] can be established for an Israelite with terumah! R. Pappa answered. That is different, for it is wirtten: "your terumah" — It shall be yours (Pesachim 23a). 103

as corn from the threshing-floor - It was taught: Terumah is not taken from produce whose processing was completed for produce whose processing was not completed; and it is not taken from produce whose processing was not completed for produce whose processing was completed, it being written: "and your terumah will be accounted for you as corn from the threshing-floor." From the Levite's being commanded to take terumah from what has been processed, it follows that he himself may not be given stalks [i.e., unprocessed grain,] by the Israelite (Yerushalmi Terumoth 1:5). 104

as corn from the threshing-floor - Terumah is not taken from clean [produce] for unclean, it being written: "as corn from the threshing-floor and as the fulness of the winepress." [The implication is that

terumah must] correspond to the threshing-floor and the wine press, [whose piles cannot be half unclean-half clean] (*Ibid.* 2:1).¹⁰⁵

18:28 Thus shall you separate, you, too, the *terumah* of the L-rd, of all of your tithes that you take from the children of Israel; and you shall give of it the *terumah* of the L-rd to Aaron the priest.

Thus shall you separate, you, too - "Thus shall you separate" — this refers to the Levites [who separate "terumath ma'aser]; "you, too" — this refers to the priests [who separate for themselves terumah gedolah from their own produce] (Sifrei). 106

you, too - "you" — to include your deputies [for the taking of terumah]. And just as you, "children of the covenant," so your deputies must be "children of the covenant" (Bava Metzia 22a, 71b). 107

you - "you" [take terumah] — and not tenant-farmers; "you" — and not partners; "you" — and not guardians; "you" — and not one who takes terumah from what is not his (Kiddushin 41b).¹⁰⁸

the terumah of the L-rd - It was taught: If one betroths a woman with terumath ma'aser, she is [halachically] betrothed. And though it is written thereof: "the terumah of the L-rd," it is not written of it: "to the L-rd" [which would imply that it belongs to the L-rd, and could not be used for one's own purposes] (Kiddushin 53a).¹⁰⁹

of all of your tithes - All tithes are hereby likened to one another, so that just as a minor does not bring a tithe of the corn, he does not bring a tithe of the beasts (Yerushalmi Terumoth 1:1).¹¹⁰

of all of your tithes - Terumath ma'aser [unlike terumah gedolah] may be taken from that which is not in the proximity of the produce it is being taken for, it being written: "of all your tithes," "shall you separate" — though one [pile]is in Judah, and the other in the Galil (Ibid. 2:1)."

and you shall give of it - an amount which can be called "a gift" — whence it was derived: The size of the challah [the priest's share of the

dough]: for a private person, whose loaf is small — one part of twenty-four; for a baker, whose loaf is large — one part of forty-eight (Yerushalmi Challah 2:3).¹¹²

to Aaron the priest - Now did Aaron live forever! He did not even enter Eretz Yisrael! We are hereby being taught that he is destined to live again and that Israel shall give him *terumah* — a Scriptural allusion to the resurrection (Sanhedrin 90b).¹¹³

to Aaron the priest - It was taught in the school of R. Yishmael: "and you shall give of it to Aaron the priest." Now did Aaron live forever? What, then, is the intent of: "to Aaron"? "As Aaron," viz.: Just as Aaron was a Torah scholar, so his descendants [in order to receive the tithes, must be] Torah scholars — whence it was derived that the priestly gifts are not given to a priest who is an ignoramus (*Ibid*.).¹¹⁴

to Aaron the priest - It was taught: Terumath ma'aser may be taken from the clean [produce] for the unclean, it being written: "and you shall give of it ... to Aaron the priest" — Do that which will allow it to be given to Aaron the priest in his priesthood [and he may, indeed, eat clean terumah in his priesthood, notwithstanding its having been taken for unclean produce] (Yerushalmi Terumoth 2:1). 115

to Aaron the priest - Do that which will allow it to be given to Aaron the priest in his priesthood — whence it is derived that it is forbidden to intentionally render *tevel* [produce from which the tithe has not yet been separated] unclean (Yerushalmi Challah 3:2).¹¹⁶

18:29 From all of your gifts you shall separate all the *terumah* of the L-rd, of all of its best, its hallowed part from it.

From all of your gifts you shall separate - "From all" — Even if the Levite preceded the priest [and took his share before the priest had taken his], he must separate terumah gedolah [for the priest] (Beitzah 13b).¹¹⁷

From all of your gifts you shall separate - It was taught: If one separated *terumah* before first-fruits [contrary to the prescribed order] he does not receive stripes, this [i.e., not to separate *terumah* before

first-fruits] being a negative commandment linked to a positive one, viz.: "From *all* of your gifts [including first-fruits, as in the above instance,] you shall separate" (*Temurah* 4b).¹¹⁸

of all of its best - "its best" — yes; its worst — no. This teaches us that *terumah* is not taken from inferior quality for superior quality (*Ibid*. 5a).¹¹⁹

of all of its best, etc. - It was taught: Terumath ma'aser may be taken from the clean for the unclean, it being written: "of all of its best, its hallowed part from it" — Take of its "hallowed" part [i.e., the part that is clean] (Yerushalmi Terumoth 2:1).¹²⁰

of all of its best, etc. - R. Shimon b. Lakish said: If a Levite took his "first ma'aser" while it was still in the stalk [i.e., before winnowing], he is not liable for "the great terumah" [for the priest]. Whence is this derived? R. Yossi said: From: "of all of its best, the hallowed part from it" — of all of its best [i.e., terumath ma'aser], and not its best and that of his neighbor [the priest — i.e., terumah gedolah] (Ibid.).¹²¹

its hallowed part from it - This ["from it" teaches us that terumah gedolah must be taken in the proximity of the produce for which it is being taken (*Ibid*.).¹²²

its hallowed part from it - It was taught: Whence is it derived that terumah [which has fallen into non-terumah] is neutralized [so as not to render the whole consecrated] only where there is a ratio of one part [of terumah] to [at least] one hundred parts [of non-terumah]? From: "of all of its best, its hallowed part from it" — that [part is to be given as terumath ma'aser] which you lift out from it [i.e., from non-hallowed food] if its hallowed part fall into it. And how much is that? One part to a hundred (Yerushalmi Terumoth 4:1).¹²³

18:30 And you shall say to them: When you separate its best from it, then it shall be reckoned to the Levites as produce of the threshing-floor and as produce of the winepress.

When you separate its best part - This constitutes an exhortation to the Levites to take *terumah* only of the best part (Sifrei).¹²⁴

18:31 And you shall eat it in every place, you and your household. For it is payment to you, in lieu of your service in the tent of meeting.

And you shall eat it in every place - It was taught: R. Akiva says: Terumah goes to the priest; "the first ma'aser," to the Levite, it being written: "And you shall eat it in every place": [This is addressed to] one who may eat it [ma'aser rishon] in every place, which excludes a priest, who may not eat it in a cemetery (Yerushalmi Ma'aser Sheni 8:3).¹²⁵

you and your household - This teaches us that an Israelite woman married [to a Levite] may depute a messenger to take *terumah* [from her husband's ma'aser] (Yevamoth 86a).¹²⁶

you and your household - This teaches us that if he serves, he receives [ma'aser], and if he does not serve, he does not receive. From here it is derived that if a Levite accepts upon himself the entire service of the Levites with one exception, he has no portion among the Levites (Sifret).¹²⁷

18:32 And you shall not bear sin because of it when you separate its best part from it. And the holy things of the children of Israel you shall not profane and you shall not die.

And you shall not bear sin because of it - R. Ilai said: Whence is it derived that if one gives terumah from the inferior for the superior [quality], his terumah is valid? From: "And you shall not bear sin because of it when you separate its best part from it." If it [inferior terumah] is not considered holy [i.e., valid], why should there be any "bearing of sin"? [i.e., He simply would repeat the process with superior terumah] — whence it is derived that if one gives terumah from the inferior for the superior, his terumah is valid (Yevamoth 89b). 128

You shall not profane - The Rabbis taught: The priests and the Levites who assist in the shearing houses, the threshing bins, and the slaughterhouses are not to be given *terumah* in lieu of this service; and giving it to them is a profanation, it being written in this regard (*Malachi* 2:8): "You have destroyed the covenant of the Levite," and: "And the holy things of the children of Israel you shall not profane and you shall not die" (*Bechoroth* 26b). 129

you shall not profane, etc. - R. Shimon b. Lakish said: If a Levite took his "first ma'aser" while it was still in the stalk [i.e., before winnowing], he may not eat of it in this unprocessed state, it being written: "And the holy things of the children of Israel you shall not profane and you shall not die" (Yerushalmi Terumoth 1:5). 130

Chukath

19:2 This is the statute of the Torah, which the L-rd has commanded, saying: Speak to the children of Israel and let them take unto you a red heifer, complete, which does not have a blemish, upon which a yoke has not come.

This is the statute - The three varieties [cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet] and the seven sprinklings of the red heifer are mutually indispensable. Why so? For "statute" is written in respect to it (Menachoth 27a).

This is the statute - It was taught: R. Eliezer says: It is written here: "statute," and elsewhere [in respect to the Yom Kippur service] (*Leviticus* 16:34): "And this shall be unto you an everlasting *statute*." Just as there, [the priest ministers] in the white garments, so, here, in the white garments (*Sifrei*).²

This is the statute of the Torah - It was taught: Whence is it derived that the slaughtering of the red heifer, the receiving of its blood, the sprinkling of its blood, its burning, and the flinging of the cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet are permissible only in the daytime? From: "Torah" [i.e., "one Torah for all" (and just as we find that sprinkling is permissible only in the daytime, so, all the others)]. I might think that also included [in the daytime stipulation] are the gathering of its ashes, the pouring of the water, and the sanctification [i.e., the depositing of the ashes in the water]; it is, therefore, written [to counter-indicate this]: "This" [and not the latter] (Yoma 42b).^{3,4}

which the L-rd has commanded - It was taught there: Seven days before the burning of the heifer, the priest who is to burn it is separated from his house. Whence is this derived? It is written here: "which the L-rd has commanded," and, elsewhere [in respect to the priestly investiture] (Leviticus 8:34): "As he did on this day [of the investiture], so did the L-rd command to do" [on Yom Kippur]. Just as there, separation [from his house (i.e., his wife) is indicated]; here, too, separation [is intended] (Ibid. 2a).⁵

and let them take unto you - "And let them take" — from the Temple treasury; "unto you" — you be the treasurer for that purpose (Sifrei).6

a heifer - a heifer, and not a calf; therefore, a calf is not taken to be raised until it is a heifer, [but, when the occasion arises, a heifer must be taken] (Sifrei Zuta).⁷

red, complete - complete in its redness. But perhaps completeness in the sense of freedom from blemishes is intended! [This cannot be, for] it is already stated: "which does not have a blemish" (*Ibid.*).8

which does not have a blemish - A blemish invalidates it, but not the heifer of the broken neck [See Deuteronomy 21:1-9] (Sotah 46a).9

upon which a yoke has not come - It was taught: This tells me only of a yoke. Whence are other labors derived [as prohibited]? From: "upon which a yoke has not come" [any manner of "yoke"]. If so, why is "yoke" specifically written? A yoke invalidates at all times — whether or not in the course of labor. Other labors invalidate only in the course of labor, but not otherwise [i.e., if performed adventitiously] (Sotah 46a).^{10,11}

19:3 And you shall give it to Elazar the priest, and he shall take it outside the encampment, and he shall slaughter it before him.

And you shall give it to Elazar - What is the intent of "it"? "it," to Elazar; and, for future generations, to a common priest (Yoma 42b). 12

And he shall take it out - "it" — alone; another is not to be taken out with it (*Ibid*.).¹³

And he shall slaughter - The slaughtering of the red heifer by a woman

is invalid, it being written: "And you shall give it to Elazar, and he shall slaughter it" — Elazar, and not a woman (Yoma 42b).14

And he shall slaughter - If he did not slaughter the heifer opposite the entrance of the sanctuary, it is invalid, it being written: "And he shall slaughter ... and he shall sprinkle." Its slaughtering is likened to its sprinkling, viz.: Just as its sprinkling is opposite the entrance, so, its slaughtering (Zevachim 113a).¹⁵

And he shall slaughter - With slaughtering, it [the red heifer] is valid; with breaking of the neck, it is invalid. Why so? For it is written: "And he shall slaughter," and: "statute" [which has a connotation of *limiting*, viz.:] slaughtering, yes; breaking, no (Chullin 24a).¹⁶

And he shall slaughter it - What is the intent of "it"? He must not slaughter another along with it [with a long knife] (Yoma 43b).17

And he shall slaughter it - This ["it"] teaches us that a labor [additional to that of slaughtering the heifer itself (as in the above instance)] invalidates the slaughtering (Sifrei). 18

And he shall slaughter it before him - What is the intent of "before him"? He must not take his mind off the act (Yoma 42a). 19

19:4 And Elazar the priest shall take of its blood with his finger, and he shall sprinkle opposite the front of the tent of meeting of its blood seven times.

And Elazar the priest shall take - Elazar the priest — two delimitations [i.e., "Elazar" and "the priest"]: Delimitation after delimitation signals inclusion, viz.: Even a common priest may perform [the sprinkling] (*Ibid.* 43b).²⁰

of its blood with his finger - This teaches us that the mitzvah is with the hand and not with a vessel (Sifrei).²¹

opposite the front of the tent of meeting - It was taught there: Seven days before the burning of the heifer they would separate the priest who was to burn it from his house to the chamber on the northeast of the Temple, since it was a sin-offering, which requires "north" [i.e., in this

instance, orientation towards the north of the altar]. And it is written: "opposite the front of the tent of meeting." The Rabbis, therefore, instituted for him a chamber in the northeast, to signalize this (Yoma 2a).²²

opposite the front of the tent of meeting - This teaches us that he was to be intent upon seeing the entrance of the sanctuary while sprinkling the blood (Sifrei).²³

seven times - The Rabbis taught: The seven sprinklings of this section — if he did not perform them to their specific end, or if he did not direct them as prescribed [i.e., opposite the front of the tent of meeting], are invalid, it being written in this regard: "statute" [connoting a categorical requirement] and: "opposite" (Rashi on Menachoth 27b).²⁴

19:5 And he shall burn the heifer before his eyes. Its skin, and its flesh, and its blood, together with its dung, he shall burn.

and he shall burn - If he did not burn it opposite the entrance of the sanctuary, it is invalid, it being written: "and he shall sprinkle ... And he shall burn." Burning is hereby being likened to sprinkling, viz.: Just as sprinkling must be opposite the entrance, so, burning (Zevachim 113a).²⁵

And he shall burn - "And he shall burn" - "And he shall slaughter." Burning is hereby being likened to slaughtering, viz.: Just as it must be whole to be slaughtered, so it must be whole when it is burned (*Chullin* 11a).²⁶

And he shall burn the heifer - Scripture hereby teaches us that [an additional] labor in its burning [i.e., burning something else along with it] invalidates it [See commentary (18)] (Sifrei).²⁷

And he shall burn the heifer before his eyes - What is the intent of: "before his eyes"? That he not take his mind off it (Yoma 42a).²⁸

Its skin, etc. - to include bits [leaping from the fire] — whence it was derived: Any amount of flesh must be returned [to the fire]; if he does not return it, it [the heifer] is invalidated. Any amount of bone must be

returned; if he does not return it, it is not invalidated ["bone" not being specifically mentioned in the verse] (Sifrei).^{29,30}

and its blood. When he finishes sprinkling, he wipes his hand on the body of the heifer, it being written: "And he shall burn the heifer before his eyes. Its skin, and its flesh, and its blood ..." [i.e., all of the remaining blood must be burned] (Zevachim 93b).³¹

19:6 And the priest shall take cedar wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and cast it into the midst of the burning of the heifer.

And he shall take - It is written here: "taking," and, elsewhere [in respect to the Paschal offering] (Exodus 12:22): "And you shall take a bunch of hyssop." Just as there, three stalks ["a bunch" being at least three]; here, too, three stalks (Sifrei).³²

And the priest shall take - What is the intent of "the priest" [i.e., Have we not been speaking of him all along?] I might think that since the taking of these items does not involve the body of the heifer, a priest is not necessary; it is, therefore, indicated otherwise (Yoma 43a).³³

and hyssop - "hyssop" — and not Greek hyssop, and not Kochalith hyssop, and not Roman hyssop, and not desert hyssop — and not any hyssop designated by an epithet (Chullin 62b).³⁴

into the midst of the burning of the heifer - I might think [that he casts it in] when the heifer has already been reduced to ashes; it is, therefore, written: "the heifer" [i.e., when it is still recognizable as a heifer]. If: "the heifer," I might think [that he may cast it in] even when it has not been burned; it is, therefore, written: "into the midst of the burning." How is this to be reconciled? [He casts it in] when the flames have caught on to most of it (Sifrei)."

19:7 And the priest shall wash his garments, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and then he shall come to the encampment; and the priest shall be unclean until the evening.

And the priest shall wash his garments - What is the intent of: "the priest"? The priest in his priesthood [i.e., in the priestly garments] (Yoma 43a).³⁶

19:8 And he who burns it shall wash his garments with water and bathe his flesh in water, and he shall be unclean until the evening.

And he who burns it - What is the intent of: "And he who burns it"? Scripture hereby teaches us in respect to all who are occupied with the heifer, from the beginning until the end, that they require the washing of garments, bathing of the body, and the setting of the sun [in order to be clean] (Sifrei). 37,38

shall wash his garments - "his garments," and not plague-garments [i.e., The garments of one who burns the clothes of the leper or of one afflicted with plague do not become unclean] (*Ibid.*).³⁹

19:9 And a man who is clean shall gather the ashes of the heifer and place them outside the encampment in a clean place. And it shall be for the congregation of the children of Israel in keeping for waters of sprinkling; it is a sinoffering.

And a man who is clean shall gather - "a man" — to validate a non-priest; "who is clean" — to validate a woman (Yoma 43a).40

and place them - one who has the "mind" to place [i.e., one who can place with intent] — to exclude a deaf-mute, an imbecile, and a minor, who do not have the "mind" to place (*Ibid.*).⁴¹

And it shall be in keeping - From here it is derived that the gathering of the ashes and the filling of [the vessel with] water for sanctification [with the ashes] require "keeping" [i.e., vigilance] (*Ibid.* 42b).⁴²

And it shall be in keeping - If one entrusts his [heifer] waters to the keeping of one who is unclean, he invalidates them. Why so? They are in

the keeping of the other, and he [being unclean] is not solicitous of them (*Parah* 7:10, see Bartenura).⁴³

And it shall be in keeping - From here they derived that it is divided into three parts: one for the *chel* [a place within the fortification of the Temple]; one for the Mount of Olives; one to be divided among all the priestly watches (*Sifrei*).⁴⁴

And it shall be in keeping for waters of sprinkling - Why is this written? I might think that [additional] labor invalidates only with the heifer itself [See commentary (18)]. Whence do I derive that it does so even with the waters? From: "And it shall be in keeping." But [in that case, perhaps the additional labor interdict applies] even after sanctification [with the ashes]! It is, therefore, [to counter-indicate this] written: "for waters of sprinkling." They are already waters of sprinkling [and cannot be invalidated by additional labor] (*Ibid.*).45

it is a sin-offering - It was taught: A sodomized heifer is invalidated. Why so? For Scripture refers to it as "a sin-offering" [which is thus invalidated] (Avodah Zarah 23b).⁴⁶

it is a sin-offering - This ["sin-offering"] teaches us that it is subject to me'ilah [abuse of consecrated property]; "it" — "it" is subject to me'ilah, but not its ashes (Menachoth 51b).⁴⁷

it is a sin-offering - Scripture refers to it as "a sin-offering"; therefore, a *treifah* [an organically defective animal] is disqualified (*Chullin* 11a).⁴⁸

it is a sin-offering - This teaches us that if he altered any one of its procedures, it is invalidated; that if he did not slaughter it to its specific end, it is invalidated; and that it is not to be burned at night (Sifrei).^{49,50}

19:10 And he who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall wash his garments, and he shall be unclean until the evening. And it shall be for the children of Israel and for the sojourner who dwells in their midst as an everlasting statute.

And he who gathers shall wash - Scripture hereby teaches us that he

who gathers the ashes becomes unclean [even] by *hesset* [merely moving them, though he not touch them] (*Ibid.*).⁵¹

19:11 One who touches the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days.

shall be unclean seven days - And further it is written (22): "And all that the unclean one touches shall be unclean; and the one that touches him shall be unclean until the evening." How is this to be reconciled? According to Scripture, one who touches a dead body is unclean [for seven days], and one who touches him is clean [for that period of time, and unclean only until the evening] (Avodah Zarah 37b).⁵²

19:12 It shall be sprinkled upon him on the third day; and on the seventh day, he shall be clean. And if it not be sprinkled on the third day, then on the seventh day he shall not be clean.

And if it not be sprinkled - R. Meir says: Any condition which is not like that of the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuven [i.e., "If yes, then ..., and if not, then ..." (See 32:30)] is not a valid condition, as it is written: "(If) it shall be sprinkled on him ... he shall be clean. And if it not be sprinkled, ... he shall not be clean" (Kiddushin 62a).⁵³

19:13 Everyone who touches a dead body in the soul of a man that shall die, and he not be sprinkled upon — the tabernacle of the L-rd he has defiled, and that soul shall be cut off from Israel; for the waters of sprinkling have not been sprinkled upon him. Unclean shall he be; his uncleanliness is yet upon him.

a dead body in the soul of a man - It was taught: R. Akiva says: A [dead] fetus in his mother's womb is unclean, it being written: "Everyone who touches a dead body in the soul of a man." What is "a dead body in the soul of a man"? A [dead] fetus in its mother's womb (Chullin 72a).⁵⁴

a dead body in the soul of a man - It was taught: Whence is it derived that a revi'ith [one-fourth of a log] of blood from a dead body causes uncleanliness? From: "Everyone who touches a dead body in the soul of a man." What is "the soul of a man" [(i.e., the amount of blood that sustains the soul)], which produces uncleanliness? A revi'ith of blood (Ibid.).55

that shall die - Scripture hereby teaches us that the body does not produce uncleanliness until death itself [and not at the point of death] (Sifrei).⁵⁶

the tabernacle of the L-rd he has defiled - It was taught: R. Elazar said: One verse states: "the tabernacle of the L-rd he has defiled," and, another (20): "for the sanctuary of the L-rd he has defiled." If it [the "superfluous" verse]does not deal with uncleanliness acquired outside] the azarah [this being the apparent implication of the first verse,] understand it as dealing with uncleanliness acquired within [the azarah itself], this, too, making him liable (Shevuoth 16b). 57

the tabernacle of the L-rd he has defiled - It was taught: R. Elazar says: If "tabernacle" is stated, why need "sanctuary" (20) be stated? And if "sanctuary" is stated, why need "tabernacle" be stated? But, if "sanctuary" alone were stated, I would say that he is liable only for [defiling] the tabernacle [of the desert], it having been anointed with the anointing oil. And if "sanctuary" alone were stated, I would say that he is liable only for the sanctuary [i.e., the Temple], its sanctity being permanent. For this reason it is stated both "tabernacle" and "sanctuary" (Ibid.).58

that soul shall be cut off - And elsewhere it is stated (*Leviticus* 15:31): "that they not *die* in their uncleanliness by defiling My tabernacle" — whence we derive that "death" is "cutting-off," and "cutting-off," "death" (*Sifrei*).⁵⁹

have not been sprinkled upon him - It was taught: R. Chanina says: "Zerikah" is subsumed in "hazayah." R. Yochanan said: This is substantiated by: "for the waters of sprinkling have not been sprinkled ["zorak"] upon him," [the term "zorak" being used] even though only sprinkling ["hazayah"] is what he undergoes (Yerushalmi Pesachim 5:6).60

Unclean shall he be, etc. - "Unclean shall he be" — to include one who immersed in the daytime, [who must wait until sunset to become clean]; "his uncleanliness is yet upon him" — to include one lacking atonement [i.e., who has not yet brought the required offering] (Nazir 45a).⁶¹

19:14 This is the Torah: A man, if he die in a tent — all that enter the tent and all that are in the tent shall be unclean seven days.

A man - to exclude a merman (Torath Cohanim, Shemini 11:10).62

A man, if he die in a tent - Resh Lakish said: Whence is it derived that words of Torah endure only in one who "kills himself" for it? From: "This the Torah: A man if he die in a tent" [i.e., "the tent of Torah"] (Berachoth 43b).63

A man if he die in a tent - Anything derived from a tree does not cause tent-uncleanliness except flax. Whence is this derived? R. Elazar said: It is derived: "tent" [here] - "tent," in respect to the tabernacle. It is written here: "A man, if he die in a tent," and there (Exodus 40:19): "And he spread the tent upon the tabernacle." Just as there, "tent" refers to a flaxen tent; here, too, it refers to a flaxen tent (Shabbath 28a).64

A man, if he die in a tent - R. Yonathan said: Let a man never keep himself from words of Torah, even at the time of death, it being written: "This is the Torah: A man, if he die in a tent." Let him occupy himself with Torah even at the time of death (Shabbath 83b).⁶⁵

A man, if he die in a tent - It was taught: "tent," "tent" [i.e., the word "tent" is repeated], to include even a tent which is not man-made (Succah 21a).66

A man, if he die in a tent - It was taught: R. Shimon b. Yochai says: The graves [i.e., burial vaults] of gentiles do not cause tent-uncleanliness, it being written: "A man, if he die in a tent," and (*Ezekiel 34:31*): "But you, My flock, are the flock of My pasture; you are man." "You" [Israel] are called "man," and not gentiles (Yevamoth 61a).67

A man, if he die in a tent - The additional organs [of birth] in a woman

do not cause tent-uncleanliness, it being written: "A man, if he die in a tent" — what is common to all humankind (Bechoroth 45a).68

all that enter the tent - This teaches us that it causes uncleanliness only via its entrance, and not via its sides, if they be open (Sifrei).69

all that enter the tent, etc. - "all that enter the tent" — this refers to partial entrance; "and all that are in the tent" — this refers to complete entrance [i.e., containment] (*Ibid.*).⁷⁰

19:15 And every open vessel which has no tight covering upon it is unclean.

And every open vessel - Scripture here speaks of an earthen vessel. But perhaps all vessels are meant! [This cannot be, for it is written:] "And every open [patuach] vessel" — a vessel which acquires uncleanliness at its entrance [petach (as opposed to one which does so upon its outer surface)]. And which is that? An earthen vessel (Ibid.).71

which has no tight covering upon it - It was taught: Whence is it derived that if an unclean object presses upon an earthen vessel, it remains clean? Rava said: From: "And every earthen vessel which has no tight covering upon it is unclean." The implication is that if it does have a tight covering upon it, it is clean. And are we not speaking [even] of such a vessel as one sets aside for his menstruating wife [to sit upon in the days of her uncleanliness], in spite of which Scripture rules that it is clean (Shabbath 84b).⁷²

which has no tight covering upon it - The Rabbis taught: [An unclean thing in] the atmosphere of an earthen vessel renders it unclean; but [if an unclean thing touches] its back, it remains clean, it being written: "And every open vessel which has no tight covering upon it." Which vessel is it that acquires uncleanliness by way of its opening? An earthen one. And it is only when there is no tight covering upon it that it becomes unclean; but if there is, it remains clean (Chullin 25a). 73-75

which has no tight covering upon it - The Rabbis taught: The atmosphere of all vessels [other than earthen ones] remains clean [if an unclean thing is suspended within it]; but [if they are touched upon]

their backs [by an unclean thing], they become unclean, it being written: "And every open vessel which has no tight covering upon it is unclean." It is only this [an earthen vessel], which, if it has no tight covering becomes unclean, and which, if it does, remains clean. All other vessels, whether or not they have a tight covering, become unclean (*Ibid.*)."

tight covering [tzamid pathil] - "tzamid" — this is the stopper [plugging the inside]; "pathil" — this is the lid. And though there is no proof for this, there is an allusion to it in (25:3): "And Israel adhered ["vayitzamed"] to Ba'al Peor" (Sifrei).78

it is unclean - What is the intent of "it"? "It", which saves itself with a tight covering [from uncleanliness] in the tent of the dead, saves itself with a tight covering in the tent of a creeping thing (Ibid.).⁷⁹

19:16 And all that touch, on the face of the field, one slain by the sword' or a dead body, or the bone of a man, or a grave shall be unclean seven days.

on the face of the field - R. Akiva says: "And all that touch on the face of the field" — to include the top-lid and the frame of the coffin (Chullin 72a).80

on the face of the field - This refers to one who, tent-like, [bent over] a dead body (Nazir 53b).⁸¹

one slain by the sword - "slain" — This refers to a limb, [with so much flesh upon it] which [in one] alive could be cured [of a disease]: "the sword" is like the "slain" [i.e., Metal which touches a dead body acquires the same uncleanliness status as the body itself] (*Ibid.*).82,83

or a dead body - This refers to a limb cut off from a dead body (Ibid.).84

or a bone - The flesh of a dead body causes uncleanliness whether moist or dry, it being written: "or a bone" — as a bone, viz.: Just as a bone is dry; here, too, dry [flesh causes uncleanliness] (Niddah 55a).

or a bone - Everything in a dead body causes uncleanliness except teeth, nails, and hair, it being written: "or a bone" — as a bone, viz.: Just as a

bone is created with the man and is not regenerated, so, all that is created with the man and is not regenerated — to exclude teeth, which are not created with him; to exclude hair and nails, which, though created with him, are regenerated (*Ibid.*).86

or the bone of a man - This is a rova [one-fourth of a kav] of bones (Nazir 53b).87

or the bone of a man - This refers to a limb [cut off] from a living person. Just as "man" connotes flesh, sinew, and bone, so the aforementioned limb must possess flesh, sinew, and bone, as in its normal state (Sifrei).88

or a grave - This refers to a closed grave [i.e., one in which there is less than a *tefach* between the body and the lid], the master having ruled: Uncleanliness penetrates and rises; penetrates and descends (*Nazir* 53b).⁸⁹

or a grave - It was taught: Where is it intimated that a spoonful [quantity of] carrion causes uncleanliness? The colleagues say: The letters are transposed, viz.: "o bekever" ["or a grave"] - "o berekev" ["or carrion"] (Yerushalmi Nazir 7:2).90

19:17 And they shall take for the unclean one from the ashes of the burning of the sin-offering, and he shall place upon it water to the vessel.

And they shall take for the unclean one - All are permitted to sanctify [i.e., to prepare the sprinkling waters] except a deaf-mute, an imbecile, and a minor, it being written: "And they shall take for the unclean one from the ashes of the burning of the sin-offering." Those who were disqualified from gathering [i.e., the above] are disqualified from sanctifying; and those who were approved for gathering [i.e., a non-priest and a woman] are approved for sanctifying (Yoma 43a).91

And they shall take ... and he shall place - What is the intent of: "And they shall take and he shall place"? If it were written: "And he shall take, and he shall place," I might think that one must take and one place; it is, therefore, written: "And they shall take." And if it were

written: "And they shall take, and they shall place," I might think that two must take and two place; it is, therefore, written: "And they shall take, and he shall place" — even if two take and one place (Ibid.). 92,93

And they shall take ... and he shall place - Rava said: Whence do I derive that "taking" by means of an object is considered "taking"? From its being taught: If it *fell* from the tube to the trough, it is invalidated — the implication being that if he himself dropped it [from the tube] it is permitted. Now why *should* it be? Is it not written: "And they shall take ... and he shall place"? It must be, then, that "taking" through some other object is called "taking" (Succah 37b). 94,95

And they shall take ... and he shall place - If one sanctified [i.e., prepared the ashes], and they fell on his hand or on the side, and from there to the trough, they are invalidated, it being written: "And they shall take ... and he shall place" — The ashes must enter the water by the man's power (Parah 6:5, see Bartenura). 96

from the ashes of the burning of the sin-offering - The Rabbis taught: Beth Hillel say: We find ashes bing called "earth," as it is written: "And they shall take for the unclean one from the ashes [lit., "earth"] of the burning of the sin-offering,"; therefore, the blood of slaughtering may be covered by ashes [though "earth" is written in that connection] (Chullin 88b).97

and he shall place upon it, etc. - The Rabbis taught: If he put in the ashes before the water, it is invalid, it being written: "and he shall place upon it water to the vessel" — The water must be contiguous with the vessel [and not separated from its base by ashes]; "upon it" — [Some of the water must then be placed upon the ashes] in order to intermix them (Sotah 16b).98,99

19:18 And a clean man shall take the hyssop and dip it in the water, and he shall sprinkle it upon the tent and upon all the vessels and upon the souls who were there, and upon him who touched a bone, or a slain one, or a dead body, or a grave.

and dip it in the water - It was taught: R. Chalafta b. Shaul says: If he

prepared less than the amount necessary for sprinkling in one vessel and a similar amount in another, it is not valid. Why so? For it is written: "and dip it in *the* water" (Zevachim 93b).¹⁰⁰

a clean man - "a man," and not a woman; "clean," to permit a minor (Yoma 43a).¹⁰¹

and upon all the vessels - It was taught: R. Yossi b. Bun said: Kashuth [a type of grass] which was gathered together is considered connected for purposes of uncleanliness [i.e., one strand transfers its uncleanliness to the next], but not connected for purposes of sprinkling [i.e., the cleansing of one through the sprinkling of the purifying waters does not cleanse the other]. Why is there a difference between uncleanliness and sprinkling? R. Ila said: In respect to sprinkling it is written: "and he shall sprinkle it upon the tent and upon all the vessels" — on all that sustain the vessel [implying a discrete sprinkling for each component], whereas in respect to uncleanliness it is written (Leviticus 11:35): "to you" — all that serves your needs [becomes unclean by transference] (Yerushalmi Pesachim 3:2). 102,103

and upon the souls - A one-day-old infant is susceptible of dead-body uncleanliness, it being written: "and upon the souls who were there"—any soul (Niddah 44a).¹⁰⁴

and upon him who touched a bone - bone the size of a barley-corn (Nazir 54a).¹⁰⁵

or a slain one - This refers to a limb cut off from a living person [with an amount of flesh upon it] which [in one] alive could not be cured [of a disease (see 82)] (*Ibid.*).¹⁰⁶

or a dead body - This refers to a limb cut off from a dead person [with a similar amount of flesh as in the above] (*Ibid.*).¹⁰⁷

or a grave - Resh Lakish said: This refers to "a grave before the commandment" [i.e., the grave of a gentile, who did not receive the Torah, such a grave producing contact uncleanliness, but not tent-uncleanliness] (*Ibid.*).¹⁰⁸

or a grave - It was taught: R. Yannai said: "or a grave" — even if he

touched Adam's grave [same idea as in the above] (Yerushalmi Nazir 7:2). 109

19:19 And the clean one shall sprinkle on the unclean one on the third day and on the seventh day; and he shall be purified on the seventh day, and he shall wash his garments and bathe in water and be clean in the evening.

And the clean one shall sprinkle - "the clean one" [for this purpose] implies that he is, otherwise, unclean. We are hereby taught that one who immersed in the daytime [and who is not clean in respect to terumah until the setting of the sun] is permitted to officiate in the red heifer operations (Yoma 43b).¹¹⁰

And the clean one shall sprinkle on the unclean one - This teaches us that there must [in dipping] be intent to sprinkle on that which is susceptible of uncleanliness. Therefore, if [in dipping] he intended to sprinkle upon an animal [which is not susceptible of uncleanliness], and he sprinkled upon a man, [even] if there is in the hyssop [enough water left over], he dips again. If [in dipping], he intended to sprinkle upon a man, and he sprinkled upon an animal, if there is enough left in the hyssop [to sprinkle upon a man], he does not dip again (ibid. 14a).¹¹¹

And the clean one shall sprinkle on the unclean one - A gentile is not susceptible of uncleanliness, it being written: "And the clean one shall sprinkle on the unclean one." All who are subject to cleansing are susceptible of uncleanliness, and all who are not subject to cleansing are not susceptible of uncleanliness (Nazir 61b).¹¹²

And the clean one shall sprinkle on the unclean one - It was taught: R. Yehoshua b. K'vusai said: I always understood: "And the clean one shall sprinkle on the unclean one" as prescribing that one clean person must sprinkle upon one unclean one — until I learned from the discussion of the granary of Yavneh, in respect to which the sages rule: Even if they were all gentiles and one Jew deposited his produce therein, it is demai ["suspect" (in respect to the taking of tithes)], that one clean person may sprinkle on many unclean ones (Yerushalmi Demai 3:4).¹¹³

on the third day - There is no immersion and no sprinkling until

sunrise, it being written: "And the clean one shall sprinkle on the unclean one on the third day and on the seventh day"; and immersion is likened to sprinkling (Megillah 20a).¹¹⁴

on the third day and on the seventh day - What is the intent of this ["day" instead of merely "third" and "seventh"]? It is needed. I might think: "third", to exclude the second; "seventh," to exclude the sixth, in that he thereby reduces the days of cleanliness; but if he sprinkled on the third and the eighth, thereby increasing the days of cleanliness, I should think it would be valid; it is, therefore, written ["day," i.e., specifically, that day] (Kiddushin 62a). 115,116

and he shall be purified - From here it is derived that earthen vessels do not become progenitors of uncleanliness ["av hatumah"]. How so? It is written: "and he shall be purified ... (22) and all that the unclean one touches shall become unclean, and the soul that touches him shall become unclean": Wherever "purified" obtains, there obtains: "and the soul that touches shall become unclean," and wherever "purified" does not obtain [as with earthen vessels, which cannot be purified by immersion, but must be broken], there does not obtain: "and the soul that touches shall become unclean" (Eruvin 104b, see Rashi). 117

and he shall be purified on the seventh day - What is the intent of this [i.e., Is it not obvious from the context]? It is necessary. I might think that this [seven-day requirement] applies to consecrated food, but for terumah one day is sufficient; it is, therefore, written otherwise (Kiddushin 62a).¹¹⁸

and he shall wash his garments, etc. - This tells me only [that he may wash his garments] on the seventh day. Whence do I derive the eighth, ninth, and tenth days [as also permissible]? From: "and he shall be purified on the seventh day" followed by: "and he shall wash his garments ... and be clean in the evening" (Sifrei). 119

and he shall bathe in water, etc. - If the purifying waters were sprinkled on one's mouth [i.e., his tongue], they do not avail, it being written: "and he shall be purified on the seventh day, and he shall wash his garments and bathe in water" [and the tongue, not being subject to bathing, is not subject to sprinkling] (Kiddushin 25a). 120

19:20 And a man, if he becomes unclean and does not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from the midst of the congregation, for he has defiled the sanctuary of the L-rd. The waters of cleansing have not been sprinkled upon him; he is unclean.

And a man - "a man" — to exclude a minor from *kareth* [cutting-off] (*Erchin* 3a).¹²¹

if he becomes unclean [asher yitma] - R. Ada b. Ahavah said to Rava: According to your view that wherever "asher" is written, optionality is intended, then "And a man, asher he becomes unclean and does not purify himself" should indicate that his becoming unclean or not is entirely a matter of his volition, so that if he became unclean through a meth mitzvah [a dead body with no one else to bury it], in which instance he is commanded to become unclean, he should not be liable [for kareth if he thereafter entered the sanctuary]! He answered: That instance is different, it being specifically written in that regard (13): "Unclean shall he be" — in any event [even in that of a meth mitzvah] (Makkoth 8a). 122

and does not purify himself - This teaches us that one who requires purification [on the third and seventh days by reason of defilement through an av hatumah] incurs the [kareth] penalty for entering the sanctuary, but one who does not require [such] purification [i.e., one with a lesser form of uncleanliness,] is not thus liable (Yerushalmi Nazir 7:4).¹²³

from the midst of the congregation - It was taught: R. Shimon says: The anointed high-priest need not offer up a bullock of forgetfulness for [unwitting] defilement of the sanctuary and its appurtenances, as it is written: "that soul shall be cut off from the midst of the congregation" — one whose [unwitting] sin is similar to those of [other] individuals, i.e., the congregation [as opposed to the high-priest, who does not, as others, bring a sin-offering for unwitting defilement of the sanctuary] (Horiyoth 9b).¹²⁴

19:21 And it shall be for them as an everlasting statute. And the

sprinkler of the waters of cleansing shall wash his clothing, and he who touches the waters of cleansing shall be unclean until the evening.

And the sprinkler of the waters of cleansing - Who is "the sprinkler"? The carrier. Let it then be written: "the carrier"! We are hereby taught that there must be the amount necessary for sprinkling [for the carrier to become unclean] (Yoma 14a).¹²⁵

20:1 And the children of Israel, the entire congregation, came to the desert of Tzin on the first month. And the people dwelt in Kadesh, and Miriam died there, and she was buried there.

the desert of Tzin - It was taught: R. Yossi b. R. Chanina said: The desert of Tzin and the desert of Sinai are one and the same. Why, then, was it called "the desert of Tzin"? Because the Jews were commanded ["nitztavu" (i.e., they were given the Torah)] there (Shabbath 89a).

and Miriam died there - It was taught: R. Ammi said: Why is the death of Miriam juxtaposed with the section on the red heifer? To teach that just as the red heifer atones, so does the death of the righteous (*Moed Katan 28a*).²

and Miriam died there - It was taught: R. Elazar said: It is written here: "and Miriam died there," and (Deuteronomy 34:5): "And Moses died there ... by the mouth of the L-rd." Just as there, "by the mouth of the L-rd," here, too, "by the mouth of the L-rd." Why, then, is it not explicitly written? Because it is unseemly to state it [in respect to a woman]. And from here it is derived that the angel of death, and worms and maggots did not prevail over her (Bava Bathra 17a).^{3,4}

and Miriam died there - It was taught: If one weaves a shroud for a body, Rava said: It is permitted [for a living person to derive benefit therefrom]. Why so? Intention [i.e., its being intended for the body] does not create fact [i.e., its being worn by the body, in which instance others may not derive benefit from it], this being derived: "there" [here] - "there" (Deuteronomy 12:2), in respect to idolatry. Just as an object is not forbidden by being intended for idolatry [i.e., if one

consecrates a house to an idol, it is not forbidden to derive benefit therefrom], here, too, intention does not cause it to be forbidden (Sanhedrin 47b).⁵

and Miriam died there - It is written here: "and Miriam died there," and, elsewhere (*Deuteronomy* 21:4): "and they shall break the neck of the heifer there in the stream." Just as benefit may not be derived from the heifer, it may not be derived from a dead person (*Avodah Zarah* 29b).6

and she died ... and she was buried - "and she died ... and she was buried" — burial follows closely upon death, whence it is derived that the litter of women is not left outside for mourners to gather around it [as it is in the case of men] (Moed Katan 28a).

20:2 And there was no water for the congregation, and they assembled against Moses and Aaron.

and there was no water for the congregation - It was taught: R. Yossi b. R. Yehudah said: The well was given to Israel in the merit of Miriam, and when she died, it was removed, as it is written: "and Miriam died there ... and there was no water for the congregation" (Ta'anith 9a).8

20:5 And why did you take us up out of Egypt to bring us to this evil place? It is not a place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates, and there is no water to drink.

It is not a place of seed - From here it is derived that the blood of slaughtering is not covered with desert soil, for though grass can grow in it, it is not sown [(soil that can be sown being required for covering the blood)], as it is written: "It is not a place of seed or of figs" (Shiltei Hagiborim Chullin 6).9

20:8 Take the rod and assemble the congregation, you and Aaron your brother, and speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will give its waters; and draw forth water for

them from the rock, and give to drink the congregation and their cattle.

and give to drink the congregation and their cattle - Here [in "and their cattle"] it is intimated that the Torah is solicitous for the possessions of Israel (Menachoth 76b).¹⁰

20:12 And the L-rd said to Moses and to Aaron: Because you did not believe in Me to sanctify Me before the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore, you will not bring this congregation to the land which I gave to them.

Because you did not believe in Me - R. Ammi said: There is no death without sin, as was stated by R. Shimon b. Elazar: Moses and Aaron, too, died because of their sin, as it is written: "Because you did not believe in Me," the implication being: Had you belived in Me, your time would not yet have come to depart from the world (Shabbath 55b)."

Because you did not believe in Me - It was taught: Two goodly leaders arose for Israel, Moses and David. Moses said: Let my ignominy be recorded, as it is written: "Because you did not believe in Me." David said: Let it [the incident of Batsheva] not be recorded, as it is written (*Psalms32:1*): "Happy is he whose offense is pardoned, whose sin is concealed" (*Yoma* 86b).¹²

Because you did not believe in Me - It was taught: It is good for the righteous that they are not granted grace in this world. It is good for Moses that he was not granted grace in this world, as it is written: "Because you did not believe in Me," the implication being: Had you believed in Me, your time would not yet have come to depart from this world (*Ibid.* 87a)¹³

20:13 They are the waters of Merivah, whereby the children of Israel strove with the L-rd, and He was sanctified through them.

They are the waters of Merivah - R. Chanina said: "They are the waters of Merivah" — the ones seen by Pharaoh's astrologers, by which they

erred. They saw that the savior of Israel was destined to be smitten by water, and Pharaoh commanded (*Exodus* 1:22): "Every son that is born shall you cast into the Nile" — and they did not know that it was through the waters of *Merivah* that he was destined to be smitten (*Sanhedrin* 101b).^{14,15}

whereby they strove with the L-rd - R. Chamma b. R. Chanina said: If one quarrels with his teacher, it is as if he would quarrel with the Shechinah, it being written: "They are the waters of Merivah, whereby the children of Israel strove with the L-rd"; [in striving with Moses] (*Ibid.* 110a).¹⁶

20:26 And remove Aaron's garments and put them upon Elazar, his son. And Aaron shall be gathered in, and he shall die there.

And remove Aaron's garments - It was taught: R. Elazar said: Why is the death of Aaron juxtaposed with the priestly garments? To teach that just as the priestly garments effect atonement, so does the death of the righteous (*Moed Katan 28a*).¹⁷

20:29 And the entire congregation saw that Aaron died; and the entire house of Israel mourned Aaron thiry days.

And the entire congregation saw - R. Avahu said: Read it not: "Vayiru" ["and they saw"], but "Vayirau" ["and they feared"] (Ta'anith 9a).18

21:1 And the Canaanite heard, the king of Arad, who dwelt in the south, that Israel was coming by way of Atharim, and he fought with Israel, and he took captives of them.

And the Canaanite heard - What did he hear? He heard that Aaron had died and that the clouds of glory had departed, and he inferred that he was thus given warrant to wage war against the Jews (*Ibid.*).¹

the king of Arad - It was taught: Sichon, Arad, and Canaan are one and

the same. "Arad" — he was like a wild ass [arod] in the desert; "Canaan" — this was the name of his kingdom; "Sichon" — this was his name (Rosh Hashanah 3a).²

by way of Atharim - What is the intent of "by way of Atharim"? He heard that the great guide [tayar] who had pointed out [tar] the way to them had died, and they came and attacked them (Yerushalmi Yoma 1:1).

and he took captives of them - Whence is it derived that a gentile can acquire a Jew for his labor? From: "and he took captives of them" (Gittin 38a).4

21:2 And Israel vowed a vow to the L-rd and said: If You give this people into my hand, then I shall consecrate their cities.

And Israel vowed a vow - A certain amora began his remarks as follows: If one possesses property of a convert [acquired before his conversion], what shall he do [against the evil eye] that it remain in his hand? Let him use some of it towards the purchase of a Torah scroll. R. Nachman B. Yitzchak said: Even the writing of tefillin [will suffice to this end]. R. Shesheth said: Even a husband with his wife's property [should follow this practice]. Rava said: Even one who profited from some business. R. Pappa said: Even one who found a lost object. R. Chanan said: Whence is this derived? From: "And Israel vowed a vow, etc." (Eruvin 64b).

21:5 And the people spoke against the L-rd and against Moses: Why did you take us up out of Egypt to die in the desert; and our souls loathe this flimsy bread.

against the L-rd and against Moses - R. Avahu said: If one arraigns his teacher, it is as if he would arraign the Shechinah, it being written: "And the people spoke against the L-rd and against Moses" (Sanhedrin 110a).6

and our souls loathe - It was taught: Moses said to Israel: You are ingrates, as it is written: "and our souls loathe this flimsy ["lightish"]

bread" [The manna was so light that it was absorbed in their limbs and made defecation unnecessary — and for this they complained!] (Avodah Zarah 5a).

21:8 And the L-rd said to Moses: Make for yourself a fiery [serpent] and place it upon a pole; and it shall be, all who are bitten shall see it and live.

Make for yourself - "Make for yourself" - of your own (Ibid. 44a).8

and it shall be, all who are bitten - It is not written: "the one who is bitten," but: "all who are bitten," even by a dog, even by a snake. But they are not exactly alike. If one were bitten by a dog, he had only to see [Moses' serpent] to be healed; if he were bitten by a snake, he had to gaze at it (Yerushalmi Rosh Hashanah 3:9).9

shall see it and live - Now does a serpent wield the power of life and death? The intent is, rather, that when Israel raised their eyes on high, and humbled their hearts to their Father in heaven, they were healed; and if not, they were quashed (Rosh Hashanah 29a).¹⁰

21:9 And Moses made the brazen serpent and placed it on the pole. And it was, if a man were bitten by a snake, then he would look upon the brazen serpent and live.

the brazen serpent - R. Yossi said: In four places it is written: "Make for yourself." In three of them it is explained [exactly what to make], and in one, it is not explained. [The three:] (Genesis 6:14): "Make for yourself an ark of gofer wood," (10:2): "Make for yourself two trumpets of silver," (Joshua 3:2): "Make for yourselves flint knives." But: "Make for yourself a fiery one" was not explained [i.e., a "fiery" what ?]. Moses reasoned: Is this not, essentially, a snake? And, accordingly, "Moses made a brazen snake." R. Meir used this as a source for the homiletical interpretation of names ["brazen" and "snake" having the same root in Hebrew (N CH SH)] (Yerushalmi Rosh Hashanah 3:9)."

21:14 It shall, therefore, be said in the recounting of the wars of the L-rd: Eth and Hav at the end, and the valleys of Arnon.

Eth and Hav at the end - The Rabbis taught: One who sees the crossing of the valleys of Arnon must give praise and thanks to the L-rd. Whence is this derived? From: "It shall, therefore, be said in the recounting of the wars of the L-rd: Eth and Hav at the end, etc." It was taught: Eth and Hav were two lepers who [because of their condition] had to walk "at the end" of the camp of Israel. As Israel was passing through, the Emorites came and dug out caves for themselves [in the sides of the mountains], in which they hid, saying: When the Jews pass by, we shall kill them. What they did not know was that the ark was preceding them and the mountains were being leveled before them. When the ark passed by, the prominences of the opposing mountain extended themselves [into their caves] and killed them, spilling their blood into the Arnon Valley. When Eth and Hav reached the spot, they saw their blood flowing from between the mountains. When they apprised the Jews of this, they all broke into song. And this is the intent of (21:15): "And the spilling [of the blood] of the valleys [at the foot of the mountain] which extended itself to settle in Ar [Moav] and was joined to the border of Moav" (Berachoth 54a, b).12-15

Eth and Hav at the end - R. Chiyya b. Abba said: Even a father and his son, a teacher and his disciple, who, in their study of Torah, become enemies, do not budge from there until they love each other, as it is written: "Eth and Hav besufah" — Read it not "besufah," but "besofah" ["in the end" ("Hav" intimating "ahavah" - "love")] (Kiddushin 30b).\(^{16}\)

21:18 The well dug out by the princes, hewn by the nobles of the people, with the sceptre, with their staves. And from the desert. Matanah.

And from the desert, Matanah - Rava said: "And from the desert, Matanah; and from Matanah, Nachliel; and from Nachliel, Bamoth": If one makes himself as a desert, open to all, then the Torah is given to him as a gift ["matanah"], as it is written: "And from the desert,

Matanah." And once it is given to him as a gift, the L-rd causes him to inherit it, as it is written: "And from Matanah, Nachliel" ["the inheritance of the L-rd"]. And once he inherits it, he ascends to greatness, as it is written: "And from Nachliel, Bamoth" ["the high mount"]. But if he raises [i.e., exalts] himself, the Holy One Blessed be He brings him low, as it is written: "And from Bamoth, Hagai" ["the valley"]. And not that alone, but he is even steeped into the ground, as it is written (20): "looking out upon the face of the waste" (Nedarim 55b). 17,18

21:19 And from Matanah, Nachliel; and from Nachliel, Bamoth.

And from Matanah, Nachliel, etc. - Whoever engages in the study of Torah is elevated, as it is written: "And from Matanah, Nachliel; and from Nachliel, Bamoth" [See above commentary] (Avoth 6:2).¹⁹

21:20 And from Bamoth, Hagai, which is in the field of Moav, at the peak of the height, looking out at the face of Yeshimon.

looking out, etc. - It was taught: R. Chiyya b. Ba said: "looking out at the face of Yeshimon": If one climbs the mountain of Yeshimon and sees a small rock formation in the Sea of Galilee, he is looking at the well of Miriam (Yerushalmi Kethuvoth 12:3).²⁰

21:26 For Cheshbon was the city of Sichon the king of the Emori. He had fought with the first king of Moav and had taken all his land from his hand, until Arnon.

For Cheshbon was the city of Sichon - R. Shimon b. Lakish said: Many verses in Scripture seem to be "deserving of burning" [i.e., Their apparent unimportance seems to denigrate the Torah], but they are actually bedrocks of Torah, and so, this: "For Cheshbon was the city of Sichon ... and he had fought with the king of Moav." What difference does this make? But because the Holy One Blessed be He commanded Israel (Deuteronomy 2:9): "Do not harass Moav," He said: Let Sichon

come and take it from Moav, and Israel will come and take it from Sichon. And this is the intent of Rav Pappa's statement: Ammon and Moav were cleansed [i.e., permitted to Israel] through Sichon (*Chullin* 60b).^{21,22}

and had taken all his land from his hand - R. Yishmael taught: "and had taken all his land from his hand." Now is it from his hand[literally] that he took it? What, then, is the intent of "from his hand"? From his possession [This has various halachic implications] (Yerushalmi Gittin 8:1).²³

21:27 Therefore, the rulers say: Let us come to Cheshbon. Let the city of Sichon be built and established.

Therefore, the rulers say, etc. - It was taught: R. Shmuel b. Nachmani said in the name of R. Yochanan: What is the intent of: "Therefore, the rulers say: Let us come to Cheshbon"? "The rulers" — these are the rulers over their evil inclinations. "Let us come to Cheshbon" — Let us come and make the world's accounting ["cheshbon" (account)], the loss [entailed by the performance] of a mitzvah against its reward; and the reward of a transgression against its loss. "be built and established" - If you do thus, you will be built up in this world and estabished for the world to come. "the city of Sichon" — If a man makes himself like a young ass ["ayir," similar to "ir," "city"], which docilely follows the cajoling talk [("sichah," intimated by "Sichon") of its driver] — What follows thereafter? (28): "For a fire will go out of Cheshbon" — A fire will come forth from the accounters and consume the non-accounters. "And a flame from the city of Sichon" — from the city of the righteous, who are referred to as "sprouts" ["sichin," intimated by "Sichon"]. "It shall consume Ar of Moav" — This ["Ar"] refers to one who follows his evil inclination, as a young ass ["ayir"] follows the cajoling talk [of its driver]. "The men of the eminences of Arnon" — these are the haughty ones, as the master has said: All those of haughty spirit, in the end fall into Gehinnom (Bava Bathra 78b). 24-28

21:30 Vaniram avad cheshbon ad Divon, vanashim ad nofach asher

Vaniram avad cheshbon, etc. - What is "Vaniram"? The wicked one says: There is no High One ["ram"]. "avad cheshbon" — the accounting of the world is lost. "ad divon" — The Holy One Blessed be He says: Wait until the judgment comes ["ad sheyavo din"]. "vanashim ad nofach" — until a fire comes that needs no fanning [ad sheyavo eish she'einah tzrichah nafuach"]. "ad medva" — until their souls grieve ["ad shetadiv nishmathan"]; others say: until He does what He wills ["ad de'avid mah debai"] (Ibid.).²⁹⁻³¹

21:34 And the L-rd said to Moses: Do not fear him, for into your hand have I given him, all of his people, and his land. And you shall do to him as you did to Sichon the king of the Emori, who dwells in Cheshbon.

Do not fear him - Why should he fear Og any more than Sichon? He thought: Perhaps the merit of our father Abraham will stand in his favor, as it is written (*Genesis* 15:13): "And the survivor came and told Avram the Hebrew," concerning which R. Yochanan said: This is Og, who survived the generation of the flood (*Niddah* 61a).³²

Balak

22:5 And he sent messengers to Bilam the son of Beor to Pethor, which is by the river, to the land of the children of his people, to call to him, saying: Behold, a people has gone forth from Egypt. Behold, it has covered the face of the earth, and they abide opposite me.

Bilam the son of Beor - It was taught: "Bilam" — "without a people" [belo am]. Another interpretation: "Bilam" — He swallowed up a people [bala am (i.e., He wanted to swallow up Israel)]. "the son of Beor" — he came upon [i.e., cohabited with] his beast ["be'ir"] (Sanhedrin 105a).^{1,2}

Bilam the son of Beor - And elsewhere it is written (24:3): "the words of Bilam, his son Beor"! R. Yochanan said: Beor, though Bilam's father, was his "son" in prophecy (*Ibid.*).³

And the elders of Moav and the elders of Midian went, with charms in their hands, and they came to Bilam and told him the words of Balak.

the elders of Moav and the elders of Midian - It was taught: Midian and Moav had never been at peace. This [their sudden rapprochement] is comparable to the situation of two dogs who, though yellow [with rage] at each other, when a wolf attacked one of them, the other said: If I don't help him, today he will kill him, and, tomorrow, me — at which both joined forces to kill the wolf. This is as people say: "The weasel and the cat made a feast of the fats of the luckless one" (Sanhedrin 105a).^{4,5}

22:8 And he said to them: Abide here tonight and I will return

you answer as the L-rd shall speak to me. And the princes of Moav remained with Bilam.

And the princes of Moav remained - And where did the princes of Midian go? Once he said: "Abide here tonight and I will return you answer [as the L-rd shall speak to me"], they said: Is there a Father who hates his son [i.e., Israel]? [And they left] (*Ibid.*).6

22:20 And G-d came to Bilam at night and said to him: If to call you have these people come, arise and go with them. But only the thing that I speak to you, it shall you do.

arise and go with them - R. Nachman said: Audacity avails even against Heaven! First it is written (12): "Do not go with them," and then [after Bilam audaciously requests it]: "Arise and go with them!" (Sanhedrin 105a).

arise and go with them - Rava b. R. Huna said: From here we learn that "one is led on the road he desires to travel," it being written in the beginning (12): "Do not go with them," and, in the end: "Arise and go with them" (Makkoth 10b).

22:21 And Bilam arose in the morning and he saddled his ass, and he went with the princes of Moav.

and he saddled his ass - It was taught in the name of R. Shimon b. Elazar: Hatred abolishes the protocols of majesty, as it is written: "And Bilam arose ... and, [in the hatred of Israel,] he [alone] saddled his ass" (Sanhedrin 105b).9

22:30 And the ass said to Bilam. Am I not your ass, on which you have ridden, from the very beginning until this day? Did I ever presume to do to you thus? And he said: No.

Am I not your ass, etc. - It was taught: Bilam did not know the mind of his beast, [much less that of his Maker!] For when he was seen riding on an ass, he was queried: Why did you not ride on a horse? He

answered: "I left it in the swamp" — immediately after which: "And the ass said ... Am I not your ass?" Bilam: "For portage only." The ass: "on which you have ridden." Bilam: "Sheer chance." The ass: "from the very beginning until this day" — "and, what is more, you ride me by day and live with me at night" — it being written here: "Did I ever presume" ["hahasken hiskanti"], and, elsewhere (I Kings 1:4): "And she was for the king to lie with" [socheneth] (Ibid.). 10-13

22:32 And the angel of the L-rd said to him: Why did you strike your ass these three times? Behold, I went out as an adversary, for the way was devious before me.

for the way was devious - It was taught: Whence is notrikon [a language device whereby individual letters signify words] Scripturally derived? It was taught in the school of R. Nathan: "for the way was devious [yarat] before me" — "yarat": "yareah" [it (the ass) was afraid], "ra'athah" [it saw (the angel)], "natethah" [it turned away] (Shabbath 105a).14

23:3 And Bilam said to Balak: Stand by your burnt-offering and I will go. Perhaps the L-rd will chance before me and show me something, and I will tell you. And he went *shefi*.

And he went shefi - It was taught: R. Yochanan said: Bilam was lame in one of his legs, it being written: "And he went *shefī*" ["slantingly"] (Sotah 10a).

23:5 And the L-rd placed a thing in the mouth of Bilam, and He said: Return to Balak and thus shall you say:

And the L-rd placed a thing in the mouth of Bilam - It was taught: R. Eliezer says: [The "thing" is] an angel. R. Yonathan said: He placed a hook in his month [to "regulate" what issued therefrom] (Sanhedrin 105b).²

23:8 What I would curse, G-d would not curse; and when I would rage, the L-rd would not rage.

the L-rd would not rage - This teaches us that all those days He did not vent His wrath (*Berachoth* 7a).³

23:9 For from the top of the rocks I shall see him, and from the hills I shall behold him. He is a people that shall dwell alone, and among the nations he shall not be reckoned.

and among the nations he shall not be reckoned - A certain Sadducee said to R. Avina: It is written (II Samuel 7:23): "And who is like Your people, Israel, one nation in the land!" What is so special about you? You, too, have become intermingled with us, as it is written (Isaiah 40:17): "All of the nations are as nothing before Him." He answered: One of your own has testified about us [to the contrary], viz.: "and among the nations he shall not be recckoned" (Sanhedrin 39b).4

23:10 Who counted the dust of Jacob and the number of the rova of Israel? Let my soul die the death of the just, and let my end be like his.

Who counted, etc. - R. Avahu expounded: "Who counted the dust of Jacob and the number of the rova of Israel?" This teaches us that the Holy One Blessed be He sits and counts the copulations [reviotheihem] of Israel — When shall come the drop from which the Tzaddik will be created! And because of this thing the eye of the wicked Bilam was blinded. He asked amazedly: "He who is pure and holy, and His servants pure and holy, shall look upon this thing!" Whereupon his eye was immediately blinded, as it is written (24:3): "the words of the man of the gouged-out eye" (Niddah 31a).

the death of the just - This refers to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Avodah Zarah 25a).6

and let my end be like his - It was taught: That wicked one, too, gave a sign for himself, viz.: "Let my soul die the death of the just." That is: If my soul dies the death of the just, my end shall be like his [in the world to come]; and if not, (24:12): "Behold, I go to my people" [in Gehinnom] (Sanhedrin 105a).

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23:19 Not a man is G-d that He should deceive, nor the son of a man that He should repent. Has He said and not done? Has He spoken and not fulfilled?

Not a man is G-d, etc. - The Rabbis taught: Three are not to pass between [two persons], nor is a person to pass between them: a dog, a date-palm, and a woman. Others add: a pig; others, a snake. If they do pass, what is the remedy. R. Pappa said: To recite the verse beginning with "G-d" [(22): "G-d, who took them out of Egypt"] and ending with "G-d" ["what G-d hath wrought"]; or the verse beginning with "Not" [Not a man] and ending with "not" ["not fulfilled"]. (Pesachim 111a).8,9

Not a man is G-d, etc. - The Rabbis said: He [Bilam] is not the man [Moses], who turned the words of G-d to naught, as it is written (Exodus 32:11): "Why, O L-rd, should Your wrath be vented against Your people?" "Nor the son of a man that He should repent": He is not [Moses] the son of Amram, who caused G-d to repent, as it is written (Ibid. 14): "And the L-rd repented of the evil that He thought to do to His people" (Yerushalmi Ta'anith 2:1).10

23:22 G-d, who took them out of Egypt, exalted strength is His.

G-d, who took them out [motziam] of Egypt - From here it is derived that "motzi" is past tense [This has a halachic implication] (Berachoth 38a).11

23:23 For there is no divination in Jacob and no charm in Israel; as at this time it shall be told to Jacob and to Israel what G-d hath wrought.

For there is no divination in Jacob - It was taught: Rebbi said: All who divine are "divined after" [i.e., One who pursues the magical arts is pursued by its conjurations], as it is written: "For there is ["lo"] to him divination in Jacob." But is it ["lo"] not written "lamed aleph" [and not lamed vay, so that the translation should be "no"]? [The source of the Rebbi's statement, then, is not the verse,] but "measure for measure" (Nedarim 32a).12,13

as at this time it shall be told to Jacob, etc. - Ahavah the son of R. Zeira taught: One who does not divine is brought into the partition where even the ministering angels cannot gain access, as it is written: "For there is no divination in Jacob and no charm in Israel; as at this time it shall be told to Jacob and to Israel [directly, by virtue of the above,] what G-d hath wrought" (*Ibid.*).¹⁴

as at this time it shall be told to Jacob, etc. - R. Chanina the son of R. Avahu said: That wicked one was standing at the mid-point of the world. Whence is this derived? From: "as at this time it shall be told to Jacob and to Israel what G-d hath wrought" (Yerushalmi Shabbath 6:9).15

23:24 Behold, the people shall arise as a lion; as a lion shall it be upreared. It shall not lie down until it has eaten its prey, and the blood of the slain shall it drink.

and the blood of the slain shall it drink - It was taught in the school of R. Yishmael: "and the blood of the slain shall it drink": This [the "drink" criterion] excludes the spurting blood [at the time of an animal's death, as opposed to the flowing blood after its death] as not rendering seed susceptible of uncleanliness (Chullin 37a). 16

and the blood of the slain shall it drink - Greenish blood is clean in respect to a [niddah] stain and in respect to "drink" [rendering food susceptible of the acquisition of uncleanliness]. And though blood [in general] is "drink," the blood of the slain is necessary [in this connection], as it is written: "and the blood of the slain shall it drink" (Niddah 19b).¹⁷

and the blood of the slain shall it drink - It was taught: The woundblood of a zav [one afflicted with a genital discharge] is considered "drink" in respect to rendering food susceptible of uncleanliness, it being written: "and the blood of the slain shall it drink." What difference is it whether it be completely or partially slain [as in the instance of zav]? (Ibid. 55b).¹⁸

23:29 And Bilam said to Balak: Build me here seven altars, and

prepare for me here seven bullocks and seven rams.

seven altars, etc. - It is written (II Kings 2:24): "And they ravaged of them forty-two children." R. Chanina said: Because of the forty-two sacrifices offered by Balak the king of Moav, forty-two children were ravaged of Israel (Sotah 47a).^{19,20}

seven altars, etc. - R. Yehudah said in the name of Rav: Let one always occupy himself with Torah and with *mitzvoth*, even not for the sake of Heaven, for "not for the sake of heaven" will succeed to "for the sake of Heaven." For in reward for the forty-two sacrifices offered up by Balak the king of Moav, he merited that Ruth issue forth from him, from whom there descended Solomon, of whom it is written (I Kings 3:4): "a thousand burnt-offerings did he offer" (Ibid.).²¹

24:2 And Bilam lifted up his eyes and he saw Israel dwelling according to its tribes, and the spririt of the L-rd was upon him.

and he saw Israel - What did he see? He saw that their tent-openings were not opposite each other, and he said: Such as these [who practice such modesty] deserve to have the Shechinah rest upon them (Bava Bathra 80a).

24:3 And he uttered his parable and said: The words of Bilam, his son, Beor, and the words of the man of the gouged-out eye.

the gouged-out eye - It was taught: R. Yochanan said: Bilam was blind in one of his eyes, as it is written: "and the words of the man with the gouged-out eye" (Sanhedrin 105a).²

24:4 The words of the hearer of the words of G-d, who sees the vision of the Almighty, falling and enlightened of eye.

falling and enlightened of eye - R. Yochanan said: Bilam divined by his organ, it being written here: "falling and enlightened of eye," and,

elsewhere (*Esther* 7:8): "And Haman was *fallen* [(this has sexual overtones)] upon the bed, etc." (*Ibid.*).³

24:5 How goodly are your tents, O Jacob, your dwelling places, Israel.

How goodly are your tents, etc. - R. Yochanan said: From the [involuntary] blessings of that wicked one, you can surmise what was truly in his heart. He wished to say that they should be devoid of synagogues and houses of study, and what came forth was: "How goodly are your tents, O Jacob." He wished to say that the Shechinah should not dwell among them, and what came forth was: "your dwelling places, Israel." He wished to say that their kingdom should not endure, and what came forth was: "As the streams stretched forth." He wished to say that they should be devoid of olives and vineyards, and what came forth was: "as gardens by the riverside." He wished to say that their spirit should not go abroad, and what came forth was: "as aloes planted by the L-rd." He wished to say that they should not have kings of stature, and what came forth was: "as cedars beside the waters." He wished to say that they should not have a king succeeded by a son, and what came forth was: "He shall pour forth water from his buckets." He wished to say that they should not reign over the nations, and what came forth was: "and his seed over many waters." He wished to say that their kingdom should not inspire fear, and what came forth was: "and his kingdom shall be exalted." R. Abba b. Cahana said: They all reverted to the [intended] curse [when Israel sinned] except [what was said of] synagogues and houses of study, it being written (Deuteronomy 23:6): "But the L-rd turned the curse into a blessing" the curse [in respect to synagogues and houses of study], and not the curses (Ibid.).4-9

As the streams stretched forth, as gardens by the riverside, as aloes planted by the L-rd, as cedars beside the waters.

As streams ... as ahalim [similar to ohalim (tents)] - R. Chamma b. R. Chanina said: Why are "tents" juxtaposed with "streams"? To teach that just as streams [for ritual immersion] raise one from uncleanliness

to cleanliness, so do tents [i.e., houses of study] raise one from the scale of guilt to that of merit (*Berachoth* 16a). 10,11

as cedars beside the waters - R. Shmuel b. Nachmani said in the name of R. Yonathan: What is the intent of (*Proverbs* 27:6): "Faithful are the wounds of a lover, but cloying are the kisses of a foe"? Better the curse whereby Achiyah Hashiloni cursed Israel than the blessing whereby Bilam blessed them. Achiyah Hashiloni cursed Israel, comparing them to a reed, viz. (I Kings 14:15): "And the L-rd shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water" — as a reed: which stands in the midst of water, whose shoot is regenerated, whose roots are profuse, which is not budged from its spot by all the winds in the world, but recedes and returns with them, and which, when the winds abate, resumes its original position. But Bilam, the wicked one, blessed them, comparing them to a cedar — as a cedar: which cannot stand in the midst of water, whose roots are few, whose trunk is not regenerated, and which, as soon as the south wind blows, is uprooted and overturned on its face $(Ta'anith\ 20a)$. $^{12-14}$

24:7 He shall pour forth water from his buckets, and his seed over many waters, and his king shall rise above Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted.

He shall pour forth water from his buckets - They sent from there: Be solicitous of the the sons of the poor, for from them shall come forth Torah, as it is written: "He shall pour forth water from dalyav" — From the poor [dalim] among them shall Torah come forth (Nedarim 81a).¹⁵

24:8 The Almighty took him out of Egypt, ketoafoth and re'em are His. He shall consume the nations, his foes, and their bones shall He break, and their arrows crush.

ketoafoth and re'em - "ketoafoth" — these are the ministering angels; re'em - these are the demons [which are at the L-rd's disposal] (Gittin 68b).¹⁶

24:9 He shall crouch and lie down as a lion; and, as a lion, who shall rouse him? Those who bless you shall be blessed, and those who curse you shall be cursed.

He shall crouch and lie down - R. Avahu b. Zutrathi said: If not for its being overly burdensome, the section of Balak would have been incorporated in the *Shema* [containing, as it does, (in common with the *Shema*) the idea of G-d's protecting Israel in its retiring and its rising], it being written: "He shall crouch and lie down as a lion, and, as a lion, who shall rouse him?" (*Berachoth* 12b).¹⁷

He shall crouch [kara] and lie down [shachav] - Mar, the son of Ravina, said: Bilam committed sodomy with his ass, it being written here: "kara, shachav," and, elsewhere (Judges 5:27): "Between her legs, kara, nafal, shachav" [i.e., his choice of words is a reflection of his deep character] (Sanhedrin 105a).¹⁸

24:10 And Balak's wrath burned against Bilam, and he smote his palms together. And Balak said to Bilam: To curse my foes did I call you, and, behold, you have verily blessed them these three times.

and he smote his palms together - It was taught: It is forbidden on a festival to produce a clap proceeding from anger, as in: "And Balak's wrath burned against Bilam, and he smote his palms together" (Yerushalmi Beitzah 5:2).¹⁹

24:14 And now, behold, I am going to my people. Come, and I shall counsel you what this people shall do to your people in the end of days.

this people to your people - Should it not be "your people to this people"? R. Abba b. Cahana said: This may be likened to one's demeaning himself and attributing the denigration to another (Sanhedrin 106a).²⁰

24:16 The words of the hearer of the words of G-d, and the

knower of the mind of the High One, who sees the vision of the Almighty, falling and enlightened of eye.

and the knower of the mind of the High One - Now if he did not know the mind of his ass, how could he know the mind of G-d! What is the intent of: "and the knower of the mind of the High One"? He was able to pinpoint the moment [of the day] in which the Holy One Blessed be He manifests anger [his intention being to utilize that moment for the cursing of the Jews] (Berachoth 7a).^{21,22}

24:17 I see it, but not now. I behold it, but it is not near. A star shall rise from Jacob and a tribe arise from Israel, and it shall crush the ends of Moav and root out all the children of Sheth.

A star shall rise from Jacob - Someone came before R. Yishmael b. R. Yossi and said to him: In a dream I saw myself swallowing a star — to which R. Yishmael replied: May that man's [i.e., your] spirit rot; he has killed a Jew! "A star shall rise from Jacob" (Yerushalmi Ma'aser Sheni 4:6).²³

A star shall rise from Jacob - It was taught: R. Akiva would expound: "A star [cochav] shall rise from Jacob" — "Cozvah [i.e., Bar Chochva,] shall rise from Jacob" (Yerushalmi Ta'anith 4:5).²⁴

A star shall rise from Jacob - It was taught [(Genesis 15:5): "And count the stars ... so will be your seed"]: R. Gershon says in the name of R. Acha: "A star shall rise from Jacob" — From whom did the star [pointed out to Abraham] rise, and from whom was it destined to rise [by way of Isaac]? From Jacob (Yerushalmi Nedarim 3:1).²⁵

24:21 And he saw the Keni, and he uttered his parable and said: Strong is your habitation, and you set your nest in the

And he saw the Keni - [Why is this mentioned here?] Bilam said to Jethro: "Keni" [(one of the names of Jethro)], were you not with us in the same counsel [to subjugate the Jews (*Exodus* 1:10)]? Who, then,

established you among the mighty ones of the earth [the Sanhedrin]? This is the intent of R. Chiyya b. Abba: Three were in that counsel: Job, Jethro, and Bilam. Bilam, who counseled, was killed; Job, who kept silent, was sentenced to afflictions; Jethro, who fled, merited having his sons preside in the chamber of hewn stone [the seat of the Sanhedrin in the Temple] (Sanhedrin 106a).^{26,27}

Eithan is your habitation - Whence is it derived that "eithan" denotes strength? From: "Eithan is your habitation, and you set your nest in the rock" (Sotah 46b).²⁸

24:23 And he uttered his parable and said: Woe! Who shall live misumo el!

Woe! Who shall live misumo el, etc. - Resh Lakish said: "Woe! Who shall live misumo el!" Woe to him who makes a livelihood from the name [shemo, similar to sumo] of the Almighty [kel]! R. Yochanan says: Woe to that nation which will be present when the Holy One Blessed be He effects the redemption of His children! Who would dare place his cloak between lion and lioness when they approach to mate! (Sanhedrin 106a).^{29,30}

24:24 And fleets shall come from the coast of Kittim and afflict Ashur and afflict Ever, and he, too, shall perish forever.

And fleets shall come from the coast of Kittim - Rav said: [Kittim is] Libun Aspir; "and afflict Ashur and afflict Ever" — until Ashur there is death; thenceforward, there is subjugation (*Ibid*.).³¹

25:1 And Israel dwelt in Shittim, and the people began to commit harlotry with the daughters of Moav.

And Israel dwelt - R. Yochanan said: Wherever "dwelt" is mentioned, ill fortune is connoted — as in this instance: "And Israel dwelt in Shittim — and the people began to commit harlotry with the daughters of Moav" (*Ibid.*).¹

in Shittim - It was taught: R. Eliezer says: Shittim was its name. R.

Yehoshua said: [It was so called] because they engaged there in frivolous things [shtuth] (Ibid.).²

And they called the people to the sacrifices of their gods and the people ate, and they bowed down to their gods.

And they called [vatikrena] the people - It was taught: R. Eliezer says: They "chanced upon them" [mikreh] naked; R. Yehoshua says: they all experienced seminal discharges ["keri"] (Ibid.).^{3,4}

25:4 And the L-rd said to Moses: Take all the chiefs of the people and hang them up for the L-rd against the sun, and the burning wrath of the L-rd will turn away from Israel.

all the chiefs of the people - If the people sinned, what sin did the chiefs of the people commit? R. Yehudah said in the name of Rav: The Holy One Blessed be He said to Moses: Divide them [the chiefs] into courts [to judge the offenders], so that the wrath depart from Israel (*Ibid.* 35a).

and hang them up [vehoka otham] - What is hoka'ah? Hanging — as it is written (II Samuel 21:6): "Vehoka'anum to the L-rd in Givath Shaul," after which it is written (10): "And Ritzpah the daughter of Ayah took sackcloth and spread it upon the rock in the beginning of the harvest" [to guard their bodies from the animals, which indicates that the bodies were hanging] (Sanhedrin 34b).6

against the sun - It was taught: Capital cases are adjudicated in the daytime and concluded in the daytime. Whence is this derived? R. Sima b. Chiyya said: From: "and hang them up for the L-rd against the sun" (*Ibid.*)."

25:5 And Moses said to the judges of Israel: Let every man kill his fellows, who attached themselves to Ba'al Peor.

to the judges of Israel, etc. -How many "judges of Israel" were there? 78,600: chiefs of thousands, 600; chiefs of hundreds, 6,000; chiefs of fifties, 12,000; chiefs of tens, 60,000 — a total of 78,600. Moses

instructed each of the judges to kill two, so that the number of those killed was 157, 200 (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 10:2).8

who attached themselves [hanitzmadim] to Ba'al Peor - It was taught: "who attached themselves to Ba'al Peor" — as with an air-tight seal [tzamid pathil], whereas you (Deteronomy 4:4): "And you that attach yourselves to the L-rd" — as two [lightly] adhering dates. In a baraitha it was taught: "who attached themselves to Ba'al Peor" — as a bracelet [tzamid] on a woman, whereas: "And you that attach yourselves to the L-rd" — in a firm bond (Sanhedrin 64a).9-11

25:6 And, behold, a man of the children of Israel came and drew near to his brothers the Midianite woman before the eyes of Moses and before the eyes of the entire congregation of the children of Israel; and they were crying at the door of the tent of meeting.

before the eyes of Moses -What is the intent of "before the eyes of Moses"? As one says to another: "See with your own eyes!" He said to him: Moses, is not your Tzipporah a Midianite, and are her feet not cloven? Why, then should this one [Tzipporah] be clean, and the other unclean! (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 6:2).12

and they were crying - Why were they crying? For Zimri had said to Moses: Son of Amram, is this one forbidden or permitted? And if you say she is forbidden, who permitted Jethro's daughter to you? At that moment, the halachah escaped him, and they all burst out in tears (Sanhedrin 82a).¹³

25:7 And Pinchas the son of Elazar the son of Aaron the priest saw, and he arose from the midst of the congregation, and he took a spear in his hand.

And Pinchas saw - What did he see? Rav said: He saw the act and remembered the halachah. He said to Moses: Brother of my father's father, did you not teach us thus when you came down from Mount Sinai: If one cohabits with an Aramite woman, the zealous smite him? To which Moses responded: Let the reader of the letter be its executor!"

Shmuel said: He saw (*Proverbs* 21:30): "There is no wisdom, or counsel, or understanding against the L-rd" — Wherever there is desecration of the Name, honor is not accorded the teacher [in this instance Moses (by awaiting his decision) — but the L-rd's honor is immediately vindicated]. R. Yitzchak said: He saw that the angel had arrived and was decimating the people (*Ibid.*).¹⁴⁻¹⁷

and he took a spear in his hand -From here it is derived that one does not enter the house of study with weapons. He had taken the blade and placed it in his tunic, and walked supporting himself on its haft (*Ibid.*).¹⁸

and he took a spear in his hand -It was taught: (Deuteronomy 18:3): "And he shall give to the priest the shoulder and the two cheeks and the maw." The expounders of recondite passages say: "the shoulder" — this, for the hand, as it is written: "and he took a spear in his hand"; "the two cheeks" — this, for prayer, as it is written (Psalms 106:30): "Then Pinchas rose up and prayed"; "the maw" — as implied, and, as written: "and the woman, in her maw" (Chullin 134b).19

Pinchas

25:11 Pinchas, the son of Elazar, the son of Aaron the priest has turned My wrath from the children of Israel by being zealous for My sake among them, so that I did not destroy the children of Israel in My ire.

the son of Elazar, the son of Aaron - [It was taught: Why did Scripture point out his descent from Aaron? For after he took revenge of Zimri] the tribes began to shame him, viz.: "Did you see the son of this Puti [short for Putiel], whose mother's father [Jethro] fattened [pitem] calves for idolatry, who killed the chief [Zimri] of a tribe of Israel!" Scripture, therefore, took pains to point out his descent: "Pinchas, the son of Elazar, the son of Aaron the priest" (Sanhedrin 82b). 20-22

25:12 Therefore, say: Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace.

Therefore, say, etc. - The Holy One Blessed be He said to Moses: Hail him with "Peace!" As it is written: "Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace." And this atonement [wrought by Pinchas] is worthy of eternal perpetuation (*Ibid.*).^{23,24}

My covenant of peace - It was taught: The service of a priest with a blemish is invalid. Whence is this derived? R. Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel: From: "Behold I give to him My covent of shalem" — when he is shalem [whole], and not when he is blemished. But is it not written "shalom" ["peace"]? R. Nachman said: The vav of "shalom" is foreshortened [so that it is also readable as "shalem"] (Kiddushin 6b). 25-27

25:13 And it shall be for him and for his seed after him a covenant of everlasting priesthood because he was zealous for his G-d and made atonement for the children of Israel.

and for his seed after him - Shmuel said: If ten priests were standing and one of them [(which one being unknown to us)] left the group and lived with a woman, the child is a *shetuki*. What is a "*shetuki*"? One who is "silenced" [*shatuk*] from the status of priesthood. Whence is this derived? From: "And it shall be for him and for his seed after him a covenant of everlasting priesthood." It is required that his seed be clearly traceable to him (*Yevamoth* 100b).²⁸

and for his seed after him - It was taught: If a priest were standing and sacrificing upon the altar and it became known that he were the son of a divorced woman or of a *chalutzah* [a woman who had been freed from levirate marriage (both of the above being forbidden to a priest)], his service is, nonetheless, valid, it being written: and for his seed after him" — both fit seed or unfit seed (*Kiddushin* 66b).²⁹

a covenant of everlasting priesthood - R. Eliezer said in the name of R. Chanina: Pinchas was not invested in the priesthood until he had killed Zimri, as it is written: "And it shall be for him and for his seed after him a covenant of everlasting priesthood" (Zevachim 101b).³⁰

a covenant of everlasting priesthood - If one cohabits with an Aramite woman, the zealous strike him. It was taught: But the sages do not look with favor upon this. Now was Pinchas regarded unfavorably by the sages? R. Yuda b. Pazzi said: They were ready to excommunicate him had the Holy Spirit not "sprung forward" and said: "And it shall be for him and for his seed after him a covenant of everlasting priesthood" (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 9:7).³¹

a covenant of everlasting priesthood - See commentary on *Leviticus* 2:13.

25:14 And the name of the man of Israel who was smitten, who was smitten together with the Midianite woman, was Zimri the son of Salu, chief of a father's house in the tribe of Shimon.

Zimri the son of Salu - R. Yochanan said: Why was he called Zimri the son of Salu? "Zimri" — he became as a beaten egg [beitzah muzereth] [from a plethora of seminal emissions]; "the son of Salu" — he called attention to [silsel] the sins of his family (Sanhedrin 82b), 32,33

25:15 And the name of the woman who was smitten, the Midianite, was Kazbi the daughter of Tzur, head of the peoples of a father's house in Midian was he.

Kazbi - R. Shesheth said: Why was she called Kazbi? For she was faithless [kazvah] to her father [by living with Zimri]. Another view: "Kazbi" — She said to her father: "Slaughter through me" [kos bi] this people [Israel]" (Ibid.). 34,35

head of the peoples, etc. - Bilam said to Balak: The G-d of these people hates harlotry. Consign your daughters to harlotry and you can rule them. Balak: But will they listen to us? Balak: Start with your daughter first, and they will see and follow suit. This is the intent of: "head of the peoples of a father's house in Midian was he" (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 10:2).36

26:8 And the sons of Falu, Eliav.

And the sons of Falu, Eliav - If one said: "My property to my sons," and he had a son and a daughter — would people call one son "My sons" [or do we assume that he meant his son and his daughter]? Come and hear: "And the sons of Falu, Eliav" (Bava Kamma 143b)."

26:9 And the sons of Eliav: Nemuel, Dathan, and Aviram—
he is Dathan and Aviram, the selectmen of the
congregation, who strove against Moses and Aaron with
the congregation of Korach, when they strove against the
L-rd.

he is Dathan and Aviram - [single,] undeviating in their wickedness from beginning to end (Megillah 11a).²

when they strove against the L-rd - R. Chisda said: If one argues against his teacher it is as if he would argue against the Shechinah, as it is written: "who strove against Moses and Aaron ... when they strove against the L-rd" (Sanhedrin 110a).³

26:11 And the sons of Korach did not die.

And the sons of Korach did not die - It was taught: A place was set apart for them in Gehinnom, where they sat and intoned song [in praise of the L-rd] (*Ibid.*).4

And the sons of Korach did not die - It was taught: The sons of the congregation of Korach took a share in the land in the merit of their paternal and maternal grandfathers. And this is the intent of: "And the sons of Korach did not die" (Yerushalmi Bava Bathra 8:2).

26:53 To these shall you divide the land as an inheritance according to the number of names.

To these shall you divide the land - "to these" — such as these, to exclude minors [below the age of twenty] (Bava Bathra 117a).6

26:54 To the many shall you increase his inheritance and to the few shall you decrease his inheritance; each man according to his numbers shall be given his inheritance.

To the many shall you increase - It was taught: If one had at the exodus five sons, and, upon entering the land, ten, concerning them I read: "To the few shall you decrease his inheritance." If at the time of the exodus he had ten, and upon entering the land, five, concerning them I read: "To the many shall you increase his inheritance" (Sifrei).

man - and not women, and not a tumtum [one whose sex is in doubt] or a hermaphrodite (Ibid.).8

according to his numbers - This teaches us that Eretz Yisrael was apportioned to each tribe only according to its [numerical] status (*Ibid.*).9

26:55 Only by lot shall the land be divided; according to the names of the tribes of their fathers shall they inherit.

Only by lot - To exclude Joshua and Calev, as it is written (Judges 1:20): "And they gave Chevron to Calev as Moses had spoken", (Joshua 19:49): "And the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun. By the word of the L-rd they gave him the city which he requested: Timnath Serach" (Bava Bathra 122a).¹⁰

Only by lot shall it be divided - The Rabbis taught: Eretz Yisrael was divided by lot alone, as it is written: "Only by lot shall it be divided." And it was [so] divided only through the *urim vethumim* [on the breastplate of the high-priest], as it is written (56): "By the *word* of the lot" [i.e., the *urim vethumim*] (*Ibid.*).¹¹

by lot shall the land be divided - The Rabbis taught: When Achan was perfidious and Joshua cast lots and they fell upon him, he said: Joshua, do you come against me with lots, you and Elazar the priest? If I cast lots against you, would they not fall upon one of you! Joshua answered: I pray you, cast no aspersion upon the lots, for Eretz Yisrael is destined to be divided by means of them, as it is written: "Only by lot shall the land be divided" (Sanhedrin 43b).¹²

according to the names of the tribes of their fathers - It was taught: R. Yashiah says: The land was apportioned [according] to those who left Egypt, as it is written: "according to the names of the tribes of their fathers shall they inherit." Whence is it derived that the reference is to those who left Egypt? Perhaps it is to the tribes themselves! It is derived from (Exodus 6:8): "And I shall bring you into the land ... and I shall give it to you as an inheritance; I am the L-rd" — it is an inheritance to you (those who [later] left Egypt) from your fathers (Bava Bathra 117a.b).\(^{13-15}\)

according to the names of the tribes of their fathers - to exclude converts and servants (Sifrei). ¹⁶

26:56 By the word of the lot shall his inheritance be apportioned, whether many or few.

whether many or few - It was asked: Was Eretz Yisrael divided by tribes

or by head-count? Come and hear: "whether many or few" [which is possible only if each *tribe*, regardless of its numbers, received an equal portion] (*Bava Bathra* 122a).¹⁷

whether many or few - It was taught: By three means was Eretz Yisrael apportioned: by lot, by urim vethumim, and by money, as it is written (Jośhua 18:10): "And Joshua cast a lot for them in Shiloh before the L-rd." "lot" — these are the lots; "before the L-rd" — these are the urim vethumim; "whether many or few" [here] — these are the monies [which were used for equalizing land values (see below)] (Yerushalmi Yoma 4:1).18

whether many or few - This teaches that Eretz Yisrael was apportioned by assessment, a beth kor [(a land measure) in one area] being regarded as the equivalent of a beth sa'ah [(a smaller measure) in a different area], and vice versa (Sifrei). 19

26:59 And the name of the wife of Amram was Yocheved the daughter of Levi, who [i.e., whose wife] bore her to Levi in Egypt; and she bore to Amram: Aaron, and Moses, and Miriam, their sister.

who bore her to Levi, etc. - R. Chamma b. R. Chanina said: Yocheved was conceived on the way [to Egypt] and born within its walls, as it is written: "who bore her to Levi in Egypt." Her birth was in Egypt, but her conception was not (Sotah 13a).²⁰

27:1 And there drew near the daughters of Tzelafchad, the son of Chefer, the son of Gilad, the son of Machir, the son of Menashe, of the family of Menashe the son of Joseph. And these are the names of his daughters: Machlah, Noah, Chaglah, Milkah, and Tirtzah.

And there drew near the daughters of Tzelafchad - When the daughters of Tzelafchad heard that the land was being divided by tribes and that daughters were not included, they gathered together to take counsel, and they said: Not as the mercies of flesh and blood are those of the Holy One Blessed be He. The mercies of flesh and blood are

greater for males than for females, but the mercies of the Holy One Blessed be He are [equivalent] for all, as it is written (*Psalms* 145:9): "And His mercies are for all His works" (*Sifrei*).¹

and these are the names of his daughters, etc. - Here they are reckoned in order of wisdom, and, elsewhere (36:11), in order of age, in accordance with the view of R. Ammi, viz.: In sittings [i.e., convocations], the order of wisdom is followed [for seating arrangements]; in banquetings [or marriages], the order of age (Bava Bathra 120a).²

27:2 And they stood before Moses and before Elazar the priest, and before the leaders and the entire congregation at the door of the tent of meeting.

And they stood before Moses, etc. - Abba Chanan says in the name of R. Elazar: They were sitting in the house of study, and they [the daughters of Tzelafchad] came and stood before all of them (*Ibid*. 119b).³

27:3 Our father died in the desert, and he was not in the midst of the congregation that gathered against the L-rd in the congregation of Korach; but he died in his own sin, and he left no sons.

Our father died in the desert, etc. - "Our father died in the desert"—this is Tzelafchad [see 15:32, commentary 99]; "and he was not in the midst of the congregation"—this is the congregation of the spies; "that gathered against the L-rd"—these are the murmurers [for lust-flesh]; "in the congregation of Korach"—as implied (*Ibid.* 118b).^{4,5}

and he left no sons - It was taught: The daughters of Tzelafchad were "expounders," implying: If he had a son, we would not speak (*Ibid.* 119b).⁶

Why should the name of our father go lost from his family

because he has no son? Give us a holding in the midst of the brothers of our father.

Why should the name of our father go lost - It was taught: R. Yehudah says: It is written here: "name," and, elsewhere [in respect to levirate marriage] (*Deuteronomy* 25:5): "shall stand for the name of his brother." Just as there, "seed" is indicated, here, too, "seed" [is intended] (*Sifrei*).

because he has no son - the reason being that he has no son, the implication being that if he had a son, the son would take precedence — whence it is derived that fathers are inherited by their sons (Bava Bathra 110b).8

because he has no son - Why is this mentioned? Is it not already written: "and he left no sons"? They were sage women and were expounding: But if there were a daughter of a son, we would make no claim (Sifrei).9

27:5 And Moses brought forth their judgment before the L-rd.

And Moses brought forth - It was taught: The daughters of Tzelafchad were sage women, who spoke when the opportune moment presented itself. As R. Shmuel b.R. Yitzchak said: This teaches us that Moses was sitting and expounding the section on levirate marriage — at which they said to him: If our status is that of sons, then give us an inheritance as a son; and if not, let our mother be taken in levirate marriage. Whereupon: "And Moses brought forth their judgment before the L-rd" (Bava Bathra 119b).10

27:7 Rightly do the daughters of Tzelafchad speak. Let there be given to them the holding of an inheritance in the midst of the brothers of their father, and pass over the inheritance of their father to them.

the holding of an inheritance, etc. - It was taught: "the holding of an inheritance" — this is the inheritance of their father; "in the midst of the brothers of their father" — this is the inheritance of their father's

father; "and pass over the inheritance of their father to them"—this is the portion of the first-born [Tzelafchad being a first-born] (*Ibid.* 118b).^{11,12}

27:8 And to the children of Israel shall you speak, saying: A man, if he die, and he have no son, then you shall pass his inheritance to his daughter.

And to the children of Israel, etc. - This tells us only of the immediate situation [i.e., that of Tzelafchad's daughters]. Whence do we derive [the same halachah] for future generations? From: "And to the children of Israel shall you speak, saying" (Sifrei).¹³

A man, if he die, etc. - It was taught: the order of inheritance: A son and his offspring take precedence to a daughter. A daughter and her offspring take precedence to brothers [of the deceased]. Brothers [of the deceased] and their offspring take precedence to the brothers of their father. This is the rule: All who take precedence in inheritance, their offspring also take precedence; and the father [of the deceased] takes precedence to all of his offspring [i.e., the brothers of the deceased] (Bava Bathra 115a).14

and he have no son - the reason being that he have no son, the implication being that if he does have a son, the son takes precedence — whence it is derived that fathers are inherited by their sons (Ibid. 110a).¹⁵

and he have no son - The Rabbis taught: This tells us only of a son. Whence do we derive [the same halachah] for the son of the son, the daughter of the son, or the son of the daughter of the son? From: "and he have no" [ein lo] — "ayin alav" [lit., "look into him" (i.e., trace his descendants for purposes of inheritance)] (Ibid. 115a).16

and he have no son - The sages of the nations say that son and daughter share equally in the inheritance, expounding: "and he have no son" — but if he have a son, both [son and daughter] share alike. Whereupon they were queried: But is it not written: "and he have no son, then you shall pass his inheritance to his daughter" [which clearly implies that if he does have a son it goes to him? And would you still say that if he has a son they share alike! (Yerushalmi Bava Bathra 8:1).17

then you shall pass etc. - R. Yishmael b. R. Yossi expounded: "A man, if he die, and he have no son, then you shall pass his inheritance to his daughter." Where the deceased has a daughter you pass the inheritance from the father [of the deceased], but you do not do so where he has [no sons and daughters, but only] brothers. [In the latter instance, the inheritance goes to the father] (Bava Bathra 109a). 18

then you shall pass, etc. - It was taught: Rebbi says: In all instances [of inheritance] the term "giving" is used, but in this instance, "passing" is the term employed; for only a daughter can "pass" an inheritance from one tribe to another, her son and her husband inheriting her [i.e., what she has inherited from her father, who may be of a different tribe] (*Ibid.* b).¹⁹

then you shall pass, etc. - R. Yochanan said in the name of R. Shimon b. Yochai: If one does not leave over a son to inherit him, the Holy One Blessed be He is filled with wrath against him, it being written here: "then you shall pass ["veha'avartem," similar to "evrah" (wrath)] his inheritance, and, elsewhere (Tzephaniah 1:15): "a day of wrath ["evrah"] is that day" (Ibid. 116a).²⁰

27:9 And if he has no daughter, then you shall give his inheritance to his brothers.

And if he has no daughter - The Rabbis taught: This tells us only of a daughter. Whence do we derive [the same halachah] for the daughter of the daughter, the son of the daughter, or the daughter of the son of the daughter? From: "he has no" [ein lo] — "ayin alav" [lit., "look into him" (i.e., trace his descendants for purposes of inheritance)] (Ibid. 115a).²¹

then you shall give his inheritance to his brothers - It was taught: R. Nachman said in the name of R. Abba b. Avahu: Whence is the validity of a death-bed bequest Scripturally derived? From: "then you shall give his inheritance to his brothers" — There is another kind of "giving" which is similar to this ["giving" by inheritance]. And what is that? A death-bed bequest (*Ibid.* 147a).^{22,23}

27:10 And if he has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to the brothers of his father.

to the brothers of his father - Brothers of the same father inherit [each other] and transmit, it being written (11): "of his family and he shall inherit it" — The father's family is called "family," and not the mother's (Bava Bathra 110b).²⁴

27:11 And if his father has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to his flesh who is near to him of his family, and he shall inherit it, and it shall be to the children of Israel a statute of judgment as the L-rd commanded Moses.

to his flesh who is near to him - The Rabbis taught: "his flesh" — this is his wife, whence we derive that a husband inherits his wife. I might think that she, likewise, inherits him; it is, therfore, [in negation of this] written: "and he shall inherit it" [lit., "her"] — He inherits her, but she does not inherit him (Ibid. 111b).^{25,26}

to his flesh ... and he shall inherit her - If one says to his wife: Here is your divorce, with the exclusion of your inheritance [i.e., If you die, I reserve my rights of inheritance], what is the halachah? Do we say [that it is a valid divorce] because he has left no tie with her in the marriage itself, or do we say: "to his flesh ... and he shall inherit her" [which links inheritance with flesh connection]? The question was left unresolved (Gittin 85a).²⁷

and he shall inherit it - R. Shmuel b. R. Yitzchak taught in the presence of R. Huna: "and he shall inherit it" — The second level of inheritance is being likened to the first. Just as in the first, son precedes daughter, so, in the second, son precedes daughter (*Bava Bathra* 113b).²⁸

a statute of judgment - The conflux of this entire section is "judgment" [This teaches us that all judgments of inheritance require a beth-din] (Ibid.).²⁹

a statute of judgment - One cannot transmit an inheritance to one who is not in line to receive it, nor can he confiscate the inheritance from the

heir, though it be a monetary acquisition, it being written: "and it shall be to the children of Israel a statute of judgment," implying that this statute is not to be changed and that conditions are unavailing therein [though they are generally availing in monetary matters] (Rambam 6:1, Nachaloth).³⁰

27:18 And the L-rd said to Moses: Take for yourself Joshua the son of Nun, a man who has spirit in him, and you shall place your hand upon him.

a man who has spirit in him - From here it is derived that Joshua is called "a man"; and this is the intent of (*Psalms* 78:35): "Bread of the mighty did a man eat" — "a man": this is Joshua (*Yoma* 76a).³¹

and you shall place your hand upon him - Rava said to Rabbah b. Mari: Whence is derived the folk-saying: "The wine is the master's, but the credit is the butler's"? He answered: From: "and you shall place your hand upon him" and (*Deuteronomy* 35:9): "And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had placed his hands upon him" [In respect to this wisdom, the L-rd is "the master," and Moses, only "the butler"] (*Bava Kamma* 92b).³²

27:20 And you shall impart of your glory to him, so that all the congregation of Israel shall hear.

And you shall impart of your glory to him - R. Yehudah b. Nachmani expounded: All who gaze upon a nassi [a leader of Israel], their eyes become dim, as it is written: "And you shall impart of your [resplendent] glory to him" (Chagigah 16b).³³

And you shall impart of your glory to him - "of your glory," and not all of your glory. The elders of that generation were wont to say: "The face of Moses, as the face of the sun; the face of Joshua, as the face of the moon" (Bava Bathra 75a).³⁴

27:21 And before Elazar the priest shall he stand, and he shall inquire of him as to the judgment of the *urim* before the

L-rd. By his word shall they go out and by his word shall they come in; he and all the children of Israel with him, and the entire congregation.

And before Elazar the priest shall he stand - But nowhere do we find that Joshua had recourse to him, Elazar having been punished for deciding the *halachah* in the presence of his master [Moses (See 31:23)] (Eruvin 63a).³⁵

and he shall inquire of him, etc. - The Rabbis taught: How is inquiry made of the *urim vethumim*? Not in a loud voice, it being written: "and he shall *inquire* of him," and not by meditation alone, it being written: "and he shall inquire of him *before the L-rd*," but in the manner of Channah in her prayer (I Samuel 1:13): "And Channah was speaking to her heart" (Yoma 73a).³⁶

as to the judgment of the urim - This teaches us that though the decree of a prophet may be rescinded, the decree of the urim vethumim is not rescinded, it being written: "the [irrevocable] judgment of the urim" (Ibid. b).³⁷

as to the judgment of the urim - It was taught: Why were they called "urim"? Because they illuminated ["me'irim" (i.e., made clear)] their words (Ibid.).³⁸

as to the judgment of the urim - It is not written: "as to the ordering of the urim," but: "as to the judgment of the urim." This teaches us that when Israel goes out to war, the heavenly tribunal sits in judgment over them as to whether they should meet with victory or defeat — whence it is derived that the "Adversary" is most vehement in time of danger (Yerushalmi Shabbath 2:6).³⁹

By his word shall they go out, etc. - It was taught: A king may embark upon a non-mandated war [i.e., one that is not against the seven nations or Amalek] by license of the *beth-din* of seventy-one [i.e., the Sanhedrin], it being written: "By his word shall they go out and by his word shall they come in" [See below] (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 2:5).40

he and all the children of Israel, etc. - It was taught: "he" — this is the king; "and all the children of Israel with him" — this is the priest

anointed for war; "and the entire congregation" — this is the Sanhedrin. This teaches us that the *urim vethumim* are inquired of only for a king, for the head of *beth-din*, or for one on whom the congregation is dependent (*Yoma* 73b).⁴¹

27:23 And he placed his hands upon him, and he commanded him, as the L-rd had spoken through Moses.

And he placed his hands upon him - R. Yossi b.R. Chanina said: This [the fact that Moses placed both hands when he had been asked to place only one] indicates that a man is not envious of his disciple (Sanhedrin 105b).⁴²

28:2 Command the children of Israel and say to them: My offering, My bread for My fires, My sweet savor shall you observe to offer to Me in its appointed time.

Command the chidren of Israel - Why is this stated here? Because Moses had said (27:16) "Let the L-rd appoint — the G-d of the spirits of all flesh — a man over the congregation," the Holy One Blessed be He responded: Before you appoint Me over My sons, appoint My sons over Me, that they not slight My honor and not exchange My glory for strange gods. Accordingly: "Command the children of Israel, etc." (Sifrei).\(^{1,2}\)

My offering, etc. - How could each man's offering be offered if he himself could not stand over it [i.e., How could the two daily burnt-offerings offered by all of Israel be sacrificed, if obviously, all of Israel could not be in attendance]? For this reason the prophets ordained twenty-four [priestly] watches, for each of which there was a ma'amid [a deputation of congregational representatives] in Jerusalem; and this is the origin of the term "ma'amadoth" (Ta'anith 26a).³

shall you observe to offer - It was taught: Ben Bag Bag says: Whence is it derived that the daily burnt-offering required examination [for possible blemishes] four days before it was slaughtered? From: "shall you observe to offer [the daily burnt-offering] in its appointed time"; and, in respect to the Paschal offering (Exodus 12:6): "And it shall be

for you to *observe* until the fourteenth day of the month." Just as there, it had to be examined four days prior to slaughtering, so, here (*Pesachim* 96a).⁴

shall you observe to offer - It was taught: The Sadducees were wont to say that an individual [as opposed to the congregation] donated and brought the daily offering, expounding (4): "The lamb, one, shall you offer" — to which the Rabbis responded: "My offering, My bread, for My fires ... shall you [plural] observe" — all had to come from the communal offerings (Menachoth 65a).⁵

to offer to Me - R. Tuviah b. Mathnah said in the name of R. Yashiah: Whence is *muktzeh* [the disqualification as an offering of that *set aside* for idolatry] Scripturally derived? From: "shall you observe to offer to Me" — to Me and to no other lord. And which other lord is served by offerings? Idolatry (Temurah 29a).^{6,7}

in its appointed time - "in its appointed time" — even on the Sabbath; "in its appointed time" — even in a state of uncleanliness (*Pesachim* 77a).8

28:3 And you shall say to them: This is the fire-offering which you shall offer to the L-rd: lambs of the first year, two for the day, a perpetual burnt-offering.

two for the day - What is the intent of "for the day"? "Opposite the day" [i.e., the sun] or "in fulfillment of the obligation of the day"? "The lamb, one, shall you offer in the morning" already speaks of the obligation of the day. How, then, is "two for the day" to be understood? As "opposite the day." How is this implemented? The morning burnt-offering is slaughtered at the north-west [corner of the altar, facing the sun], and the evening burnt-offering, at the north-east (Tamid 31b). 9.10

28:4 The lamb, one, shall you offer in the morning, and the second lamb shall you offer towards evening.

The lamb, one - R. Akiva asked R. Nechunia Hagadol: If "lamb" is

written, why is "one" needed? He answered: "one" — the choicest of the flock (Megillah 28a).11

The lamb, one, etc. - It was taught: The Rabbis said: The prayers were derived from the daily burnt-offerings: the morning prayer from the morning offering, viz.: "The lamb, one, shall you offer in the morning"; and the afternoon prayer from the afternoon offering, viz.: "and the second lamb shall you offer towards evening" (Yerushalmi Berachoth 4:1).12

one, shall you offer in the morning - one in the morning, and not two in the morning (Zevachim IIb).¹³

towards evening - Rava said: the [time of] the *mitzvah* of the [second] daily offering is when the shadows incline towards evening, it being written: "towards evening," viz., from the time the sun begins to go down (*Pesachim* 58a).¹⁴

towards evening - The Rabbis taught: the daily offering precedes the Paschal offering. Why so? Let that [i.e., the Pesach offering] of which it is written (*Deuteronomy* 16:6): "in the evening," and (*Exodus* 12:6): "towards evening" come after that [i.e., the daily offering] of which it is written: "towards evening" alone (*Ibid.* 59a).¹⁵

28:6 A perpetual burnt-offering, offered at Mount Sinai, as a sweet savor, a fire-offering to the L-rd.

offered at Mount Sinai - It was taught: R. Akiva says: The burnt-offering sacrificed by Israel in the desert was the daily burnt-offering, it being written: "A perpetual burnt-offering, offered at Mount Sinai." It was offered and never ceased [being offered] (Chagigah 6b).¹⁶

And its libation, the fourth part of a hin for the one lamb.

In the holy place shall you pour the libation of strong drink to the L-rd.

And its libation, the fourth part of a hin - The Rabbis taught: "And its libation, the fourth part of a hin" [The evening offering is being referred

to]; and the [procedure for] the morning offering is derived from the evening offering (Yoma 34a).¹⁷

In the holy place - It was taught: R. Eliezer b.R. Tzadok says: The congealed wine of the libations is burned in a holy place [in the azarah]. Why so? It is derived: "in the holy place" [here] - "holy," in respect to "nothar" [what remains of consecrated food]. Just as nothar must be burned in "holiness," this, too, must be burned in "holiness" (Succah 49a,b).18

In the holy place - It was taught: Rebbi says; It is my view that even after the Jews entered Eretz Yisrael libations were offered only inside [the sanctuary, and not on a temporary altar]. Why so? For it is written: "In the holy place shall you pour the libation" (Yerushalmi Megillah 1:11). 19,20

shall you pour the libation [hasech nesech] - It was taught: R. Nathan says: "In the holy place shall you pour the libation": Scripture speaks of two libations, one of water [on the festival] and one of wine. But perhaps both ["hasech" and "nesech"] refer to wine. [This cannot be, for] if it did, let Scripture write either "hasech hasech" or "nesech nesech." Why "hasech nesech"? It must be, then, that both [wine and water libations] are intended (Ta'anith 3a). 21,22

pour the libation of strong drink to the L-rd - Resh Lakish said: When the wine is poured onto the altar, the ducts are closed, in fulfillment of: "In the holy place shall you pour the libation of strong drink to the L-rd." How is this [practice] intimated in the verse? R. Pappa said: "shechar" ["strong drink"] connotes drinking, satiety, drunkenness [i.e., fill the altar to overflowing] (Succah 49b).^{23,24}

28:8 And the second lamb shall you offer towards evening. As the meal-offering of the morning and its libation shall you offer it; a fire-offering, a sweet savor to the L-rd.

And the second lamb, etc. - Why is this mentioned? [i.e., It already has been stated in (4)] Because it is written: "The lamb, one," I might think that if the morning sacrifice had not been offered, the afternoon offering, too, should not be brought; it is, therefore, [to negate this]

written: "And the second lamb shall you offer towards evening" — even if the morning offering had not been brought (Sifrei). 25-27

As the meal-offering of the morning and its libation - it was taught: The incense of the morning offering was offered up between the [sprinkling of the] blood and the [smoking of the] limbs, and that of the afternoon offering, between the limbs and the libations, it being written: "As the meal-offering of the morning." Just as in the morning meal-offering the incense preceded the libations, so, in the afternoon meal-offering. But perhaps just as there the incense preceded the limbs, so, here! [This is not so, for] is it written: "as the limbs of the morning"? "As the meal-offering of the morning" is what is written. "As the meal-offering of the morning" [i.e., the similarity is only in respect to the meal-offering], and not as the limbs of the morning (Yoma 34a). 28,29

28:9 And on the Sabbath day, two lambs of the first year without blemish and two tenth measures of flour for a meal-offering, mixed with oil and its libation.

And on the Sabbath day - See commentary on Exodus 31:14

two lambs - [The minimum of "lambs" is two. Why, then, need "two" be mentioned? To indicate that both lambs be alike (in appearance, stature, and worth)] (Yoma 62b).³⁰

28:10 The burnt-offering of the Sabbath in its Sabbath, in addition to the daily burnt-offering and its libation.

The burnt-offering of the Sabbath in its Sabbath - [Left-over] consecrated food is not burned on a festival. Whence is this derived? Abbaye said: From: "The burnt-offering of the Sabbath in its Sabbath" — and not a weekday burnt-offering on the Sabbath, and not a weekday burnt-offering on a festival (Shabbath 24b).^{31,32}

The burnt-offering of the Sabbath in its Sabbath - It was taught: R. Akiva says: "The burnt-offering of the Sabbath in its Sabbath": This comes to teach us that the fats of a Sabbath offering are offered up on a

festival [following the Sabbath; a festival, too, being referred to as "Sabbath"]. I might think that the same is true of Yom Kippur [if it follows Sabbath]; it is, therefore, [to negate this] written: "in its Sabbath" [but not on Yom Kippur] (*Ibid.* 114a).^{33,34}

The burnt-offering of the Sabbath in its Sabbath - It was taught: The daily burnt-offering overrides [the prohibition of labor on] the Sabbath, it being written: "The burnt-offering of the Sabbath in its Sabbath, in addition to the daily burnt-offering," which clearly indicates that the daily burnt-offering is sacrificed on the Sabbath (*Pesachim* 66a).³⁵

The burnt-offering of the Sabbath in its Sabbath - "in its Sabbath," and not on a different one. If it were not offered this Sabbath, I might think it could be offered the next one; it is, therefore, written: "The burnt-offering of the Sabbath in its Sabbath" — If the designated day passed, its offering is nullified (Sifrei).³⁶

in addition to the daily burnt-offering - This ["offering" as opposed to "offerings"] teaches us that additional [mussaf] offerings are sacrificed only between the morning and the afternoon daily offerings [and not after both] (Ibid.).³⁷

28:14 And their libations: half a hin for the bullock, a third of a hin for the ram, a fourth of a hin for the lamb, wine. This is the burnt-offering of the month in its month, for the months of the year.

And their libations, etc. - The log measure was used for all the meal-offerings: six logs for the bullock, four for the ram, and three for the lamb, it being written: "And their libations: half a hin for the bullock, a third of a hin for the ram, a fourth of a hin for the lamb, wine." A hin contains twelve logs, as it is written (Exodus 30:24): "and of olive oil, a hin," followed by (32): "This [zeh] shall be holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations" — The numerical equivalent of zeh is twelve (Menachoth 89a). 38,39

the burnt-offering of the month in its month - The Rabbis taught: The first of Nissan is the new year for the shekel offerings [i.e., the daily and

additional offerings acquired through the half-shekels collected the previous month], it being written: "This is the burnt-offering of the month in its month, for the months of the year." Scripture hereby exhorts us to renew the bringing of offerings from the new [half-shekel] offering [the root of "month" and "new" being the same in Hebrew (ChDSh)]; and it [the month in question] is derived: "year" [here] - "year," in respect to Nissan, it being written (Exodus 12:2): "It [Nissan] is first for you of the months of the year" (Rosh Hashanah 7a). 40,41

the burnt-offering of the month in its month - It was taught: I might think that one could offer [the shekel offerings (see above)] in any month; it is, therefore, written: "the burnt-offering of the month in its month, for the months of the year." In one month he offers for all the months of the year. I might then think that he could offer in any month he wished; it is, therefore, written here: "for the months of the year," and, elsewhere (Exodus 12:2): "It [Nissan] is first for you of the months of the year." Just as there, Nissan [is indicated]; here, too, Nissan [is understood] (Yerushalmi Shekalim 1:1).42

the burnt-offering of the month in its month - "in its month," and not on a different month. If it were not offered this month, I might think it could be offered the next one; it is, therefore, written: "This is the burnt-offering of the month in its month" — If the designated day passed, its offering is nullified (Sifrei).⁴³

28:15 And one kid of goats as a sin-offering to the L-rd; in addition to the daily burnt-offering shall it be offered, and its libation.

And one kid of goats - A nidmeh [an animal which looks like a hybrid] is unfit for mussafim [the additional offerings]. Why so? For it is written [in this regard]: "one" — "one," unique in its form from the six days of creation (Bechoroth 17a).44

as a sin-offering to the L-rd - For instances of uncleanliness where there is no awareness [of having become unclean] both at the time [of contact] or afterwards, the kids of the festivals and the kids of Rosh Chodesh atone, it being written: "And one kid of goats as a sin-offering to the L-rd": For a sin which only the L-rd knows about, let this kid atone (Shevuoth 9a). $^{45-47}$

as a sin-offering to the L-rd - Resh Lakish said: Why is the Rosh Chodesh [New Moon] kid singled out for the expression "the L-rd"? The Holy One Blessed be He is saying, as it were: Let this be an atonement for Me for having diminished the moon [See commentary on Genesis 1:16] (Chullin 60b).⁴⁸

in addition to the daily burnt-offering - It was taught: The kid of Rosh Chodesh precedes the bullock of Rosh Chodesh [even though the bullock is mentioned first], it being written: "in addition to the daily-burnt offering ... and its libation" — Offer it after the daily burnt-offering [before the bullock] (Yerushalmi Horiyoth 3:4).⁴⁹

in addition to the daily burnt-offering - This teaches us that the additional offerings are offered only between [the morning and afternoon daily burnt-offerings (See commentary on (10)] (Sifrei).⁵⁰

28:19 And you shall offer up a fire-offering, a burnt-offering to the L-rd: two young bullocks, and one ram, and seven lambs of the first year; unblemished shall they be to you.

And you shall offer up a fire-offering, etc. - It was taught: If one found bullocks, but not rams, or rams, but not bullocks, I might think he should not bring the offering until all were available; it is, therefore, written (*Leviticus* 23:8): "And you shall offer up a burnt-offering" [(the particular animals are not specified)] — even *one* of them. I might think that he could do so even if all were available; it is, therefore, written: "two young bullocks, and one ram" (*Ibid.*).51

28:21 A tenth measure, a tenth measure shall you offer for each lamb, for the seven lambs.

A tenth measure, a tenth measure - What is the intent of: "A tenth measure, a tenth measure"? To include [as being present among the Temple vessels] a one-fifth measure, [the stress here indicating that it was not the latter measure, but only the tenth measure that was to be used in this instance] (Menachoth 87b).⁵²

28:23 Aside from the burnt-offering of the morning of the daily burnt-offering shall you offer these.

Aside from the burnt-offering of the morning - It was taught: R. Akiva says: The bullock for the burnt-offering and the seven lambs of Yom Kippur were offered up after the daily morning offering, it being written: "Aside from the burnt-offering of the morning of the daily burnt-offering," which clearly indicates that the mussafim [additional offerings] were offered up after the daily morning offering (Yoma 70b).⁵³

of the daily burnt-offering - Everything that is more frequent than its neighbor precedes its neighbor: Daily offerings precede additional offerings; the additional offerings of Sabbath precede those of Rosh Chodesh; those of Rosh Chodesh precede those of Rosh Hashanah, it being written: "Aside from the burnt-offering of the morning of the daily burnt-offering." Why mention the daily burnt-offering? [(i.e., it is understood in context)] To teach that whatever is more frequent precedes (Zevachim 89a).⁵⁴

28:26 And on the day of the first-fruits, when you offer up a new meal-offering to the L-rd, in your festival of weeks, a holy convocation shall it be to you; all manner of work you shall not do.

a new meal-offering - [What is the intent of "new"? That it be the newest of the meal-offerings; that no other meal-offerings precede it] This tells me only of meal-offerings of wheat [as itself]. Whence do I derive [the same halachah for] a meal-offering of barley? From [the repetition] "new" [here] - "new" (Leviticus 23:16). If it is not needed for a wheat meal-offering, understand it as applying to a barley meal-offering [i.e., that a barley meal-offering, too, not precede it] (Menachoth 84b).⁵⁵

28:30 One kid of goats to atone for you.

One kid of goats - R. Mesharshiya said in the name of R. Idda: In respect to all of the offerings it is written: "a kid as a sin-offering," but

in respect to Shevuoth, "a sin-offering" is not written, the Holy One Blessed be He, in effect, saying to Israel: Since you have taken upon yourselves the yoke of Torah, I consider it as if you have never sinned (Yerushalmi Rosh Hashanah 4:8).⁵⁶

28:31 Aside from the daily burnt-offering and its libation shall you offer it. Unblemished shall they be to you, and their libations.

Unblemished shall they be to you, and their libations - The libations are being likened to the [sacrificial] animal. Just as the animal is rendered unfit by blemishes, by deficiency or superfluity, so, the libations are likewise rendered unfit (Sifrei).⁵⁷

29:1 And in the seventh month, on the first of the month, there shall be unto you a holy convocation; all manner of work you shall not do. A day of *teruah* shall there be for you.

all manner of work - It was taught in the school of Shmuel: "All manner of work you shall not do" — to exclude the blowing of the shofar and the removing of the loaf [from the oven], which are [forms of] art, and not labor (Rosh Hashanah 29b)."

- a day of teruah [shofar blowing] The shofar is blown during the day, and not at night (Shabbath 131b).²
- a day of teruah One verse states (Leviticus 23:24): "a memorial of teruah," and, another: "a day of teruah." R. Pappa [in reconciliation] explained: The first refers to a festival [Rosh Hashanah] which falls out on the Sabbath [in which instance the shofar is not blown (because of the stricture of carrying on the Sabbath), but just "remembered"]; the second refers to a festival which falls out on a weekday (Rosh Hashanah 29b).
- a day of teruah The shofar may be blown the entire day, it being written: "a day of blowing" (Megillah 20a).4
- a day of blowing It was taught: R. Acha b. Pappa said: The *mitzvah* of the day [i.e., shofar,] is during the *mussaf* [additional offering] prayer.

R. Tachlifa said: And thus is it written: "A day of teruah shall there be for you. And you shall offer up a burnt-offering" [the additional offering] (Yerushalmi Rosh Hashanah 4:8).^{5,6}

teruah - What is the length of a teruah? Three yevavoth [disconnected short notes]. But did we not learn that the length of a teruah was three shevarim [nine disconnected short notes]? This, precisely, is the point of dispute, it being written: "A day of teruah shall there be for you," the Targum of which is: "A day of yevavah shall there be for you"; and it is written (Judges 5:28): "Vateyabev the mother of Sisra." The first view holds that "wailing" is connoted; the second, that "sobbing" is connoted (Rosh Hashanah 33b).⁷⁻⁹

shall there be for you - It was taught: R. Elazar says: A shofar that had been used for idolatry or a shofar from a condemned city [one that had turned astray to idol worship] is fit [for the *mitzvah* of shofar], though it is [normally] forbidden to derive benefit from such objects, it being written [in respect to shofar]: "A day of teruah shall there be for you" — in any event (Yerushalmi Succah 3:1). 10,11

29:2 And you shall offer up a burnt-offering as a sweet savor to the L-rd, one young bullock, one ram, seven unblemished lambs of the first year.

And you shall offer up [va'asitem] a burnt-offering - R. Yossi said: In respect to all the offerings it is written: "vehikravtem," but here it is written: "va'asitem" [lit., "and you shall make"], the Holy One Blessed be He, in effect, saying to Israel: Since you have come to Me for judgment on Rosh Hashanah and have gone forth in peace, I consider it as if you have been made new creations (Yerushalmi Rosh Hashanah 4:8).12

29:4 And one tenth measure for each lamb, for the seven lambs.

And one tenth measure - From here it is derived that there was only one [form of] tenth measure in the sanctuary (*Menachoth* 87b).¹³

29:7 And on the tenth day of this seventh month, a holy convocation shall there be unto you; and you shall afflict your souls. All work you shall not do.

And on the tenth day of this month - See commentary on Leviticus 16:29 and 13:28

29:11 One kid of goats as a sin-offering, aside from the sinoffering of atonement and the daily burnt-offering and its meal-offering and their libations.

One kid of goats, etc. - It was taught: R. Akiva says: The service of the day [Yom Kippur] precedes the kid offered on the outer altar, it being written: "One kid of goats ... aside from the sin-offering of atonement" [which is offered on the inner altar] (Yoma 70b).¹⁴

aside from the sin-offering of atonement - For instances of uncleanliness where there is no awareness of having become unclean at the time [of contact], but there is awareness afterwards, the kid offered on the outer altar and Yom Kippur effect atonement, it being written: "aside from the sin-offering of atonement." Whatever the latter atones for, the former atones for. Just as the inner [altar sacrifice, i.e., "the latter"] atones only for that where there is awareness, so, the outer [altar sacrifice, i.e., "the former"] (Shevuoth 2a). 15-17

29:12 And on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, a holy convocation shall there be unto you. All manner of work you shall not do, and you shall celebrate a festival to the L-rd, seven days.

and you shall celebrate a festival to the L-rd - Beth Hillel say: Peace-offerings and burnt-offerings are brought on the festival and the hands are placed on them, it being written: "and you shall celebrate a festival to the L-rd" — all that pertains to the L-rd (Beitzah 19a).18

29:15 And a tenth measure, a tenth measure for each lamb, for the fourteen lambs.

And a tenth measure [issaron], a tenth measure - It was taught: R. Yossi said: Why is there a diacritical point on the vav in the middle of the first "issaron" relating to the first day of the festival? To indicate that one should not use a three-tenths measure for a bullock or a two-tenths measure for a ram [but he should measure out the required three and two-tenths measures, respectively, with a one-tenth measure] (Menachoth 87b).¹⁹

29:18 And their meal-offering and their libations, for the bullocks and for the rams and for the lambs, according to their numbers as prescribed.

And their meal-offering and their libations - The Rabbis taught: If the day passed and he did not bring the offerings, he need not make restitution. I might think that he likewise need not make restitution for their libations though he brought the orfering; it is, therefore, written: "And their meal-offering and their libations" — [even] the next day (Temurah 14a).²⁰

29:19 And one kid of goats as a sin-offering, aside from the daily burnt-offering and its meal-offering and its libations.

and its meal-offering and its libations [veniskehem] - It was taught: R. Yehudah b. Betheirah says: On the second day it is written "veniskehem"; on the sixth, "unesachehah"; and on the seventh, "kemishpatam" — [superfluous] Mem Yod Mem, which spells "mayim" [water] — whence the water libation [on Succoth] is Scripturally intimated (Ta'anith 2b).²¹

29:31 And one kid as a sin-offering, aside from the daily burnt-offering, its meal-offering and its libations.

its meal-offering and its libations - It was taught: R. Akiva says: On the sixth day it is written: "and its libations" [as opposed to the other

days, on which: "and its *libation*" is written]. Scripture speaks of two libations: one, of water; the other, of wine (*lbid.*).²²

29:35 On the eighth day, a solemn assembly shall there be for you; all manner of work, you shall not do.

On the eighth day, a solemn assembly - R. Yochanan said: [The shehecheyanu blessing, for a special] "time" is recited on the eighth day of Succoth, but not on the seventh day of Pesach. Why so? R. Pappa said: Here [in respect to the eighth day] it is written: "a bullock"; there [in respect to the other days of Succoth] it is written: "bullocks" [which indicates that the eighth day is distinct from the others, i.e., a different "time"]. R. Nachman b. Yitzchak said: Here it is written: "On the eighth day"; there [in respect to the other days of Succoth] it is written: "And on the day, etc." [which indicates that all of the other days are conjoined, whereas the eighth day is a festival in itself]. R. Ashi said: Here it is written: "according to its law"; there it is written: "according to their law" (Succah 47a).²³⁻²⁶

On the eighth day, a solemn assembly - One who did not bring his festival offering on the first day of Succoth may bring it all the days of the festival, including the eighth day [though it is a festival in itself]. Whence is this derived? R. Yochanan said in the name of R. Shimon b. Yehotzadak: "Atzereth" ["solemn assembly"] is written in respect to the seventh day of Pesach (Deuteronomy 16:8), and "atzereth" is written in respect to the eighth day of Succoth. Just as there, it provides for the making of restitution [it being part of the festival of Pesach]; here, too, it provides for the making of restitution [though it be a festival in itself] (Chagigah 9a).^{27,28}

a solemn assembly shall there be for you - It was taught: One verse reads (*Deuteronomy* 16:8): "a solemn assembly for the L-rd your G-d," and another: "a solemn assembly shall there be for you." How is this to be reconciled? R. Yehoshua said: Divide it — half for the L-rd [i.e., spiritual pursuits]; half for you [sanctioned bodily pleasures] (*Pesachim* 68b).²⁹

29:39 These shall you offer to the L-rd in your festivals, aside

from your vows and your gifts for your burnt-offerings and your meal-offerings and your libations and your peace-offerings.

These shall you offer, etc. - When R. Dimmi came, he said: "These shall you offer to the L-rd in your festivals" — these are obligations of the festival; "aside from your vows and your gifts" — This teaches us that vows and gifts are offered on the intermediate days of the festival (Temurah 14b).³⁰

These shall you offer, etc. - I might think that it is optional; it is, therefore, written: "These shall you offer" — it is made obligatory to offer them on the festival. I might think that if another festival had passed and he had not yet brought them, he would incur the transgression of delaying an offering; it is, therefore, written: "in your festivals" — he does not thus transgress unless all the festivals of the year have passed (Yerushalmi Rosh Hashanah 1:1).31,32

in your festivals - "in your festivals" — even on the Sabbath; even in a state of uncleanliness (*Pesachim 77a*).³³

in your festivals - All the festivals are herein likened to each other in that they atone for [unwitting] defilement of the sanctuary and its consecrated objects (Rosh Hashanah 4b).³⁴

aside from your vows and your gifts - which, if vowed on the festival, are brought on the festival (Sifrei).³⁵

for your burnt-offerings - This teaches us that two can donate one burnt-offering (*Menachoth* 104b).³⁶

for your burnt-offerings - What is being referred to? If a vow burnt-offering, it is already written: "your vows"; and if a gift burnt-offering, it is already written: "your gifts." It must be referring, then, to the burnt-offering of a woman who has given birth and the burnt-offering of a [cleansed] leper (Temurah 14b).³⁷

and for your meal-offerings - What is being referred to? If a vow meal-offering, it is already written: "your vows"; and if a gift meal-offering, it is already written: "your gifts." It must be referring, then, to the gift-offering of a sotah [a woman suspected of infidelity] and the meal-

offering of rancor [brought in the instance of a sotah] (Ibid.).38

and your libations - R. Yirmiah sat and said in the name of R. Yehoshua b. Levi: Whence is it derived that libations brought with a sacrifice are offered only by day? From: "and your libations and your peace-offerings." Just as peace-offerings are offered by day, so, libations (*Ibid.*).³⁹

and your peace-offerings - This teaches us that two can donate one peace-offering (*Menachoth* 104b).⁴⁰

and your peace-offerings - to include the peace-offerings of a Nazirite (Temurah 14b).⁴¹

Matoth

30:2 And Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the children of Israel, saying: This is the thing that the L-rd has commanded:

of the children of Israel - From here it is derived that the children of Israel are susceptible of transgression of "He shall not break his word," but gentiles are not (Sifrei Zuta).1

This is the thing - It was taught: "This [i.e., only what is explicitly specified herein] is the thing": A sage "permits" [i.e., "annuls"] a vow, and a husband "breaks" it — whence R. Yochanan derived: If a sage employed the husband's term, or a husband, the sage's, he has said nothing (Nedarim 78a).

This is the thing - It was taught: It is written here: "This is the thing," and, in respect to slaughtering outside of the sanctuary (Leviticus 16:2): "This is the thing." Just as there, Aaron, and his sons, and all of Israel [are indicated], so, in respect to vows, Aaron, and his sons, and all of Israel. To what end? To permit three lay judges [to sit as a beth-din for the absolution of vows ("Aaron," "sons," and "Israel," being reckoned as one each in this regard)]. But is it not written [touching the absolution of vows]: "to the heads of the tribes"? That refers to a single expert [as authorized to absolve] (Nedarim 78a).³⁻⁵

This is the thing - Rava Zuti said to R. Ashi: Perhaps the "this" in "This is the thing" implies that the institution of "the heads of the tribes" [in respect to the absolution of vows] obtains only in "this" generation! He answered [It does not serve for this, but for the derivation]: "this" [here] - "this," in respect to slaughtering outside the sanctuary [see above] (Bava Bathra 120b).^{6,7}

This is the thing - It was taught: I might think, because we find that Scripture likened a [knowledgeable] minor to an adult in respect to the

willful breaking of an oath, interdictions, and "He shall not break," that [abuse of] his consecrations entails an offering; it is, therefore, written: "This is the thing" [i.e., only what is explicitly stated herein] (Niddah 46b).^{8,9}

This is the thing, etc. - It was taught: I might think that they [those presiding over the absolution] should open with the L-rd's honor [i.e., "Had you known that your vowing was demeaning of the L-rd's honor, would you have vowed?"]; it is, therefore, written [to negate this]: "This is the thing that the L-rd commanded, etc." Scripture is intent upon others absolving one of his vows, and if you say thus [i.e., that the above formula is valid for the absolution of vows], you would be uprooting the section on vows from the Torah [for one could thus easily absolve himself and not have recourse to others to find an "opening" for him] (Yerushalmi Nedarim 9:1). 10,11

30:3 A man, if he vow a vow to the L-rd or swear an oath to bind a bond upon his soul, he shall not break his word; according to all that issues from his mouth shall he do.

A man, if he vow a vow - It was taught: "A man" — to exclude a minor. I would then think that one of twelve years and a day were also excluded; it is, therefore, derived [in negation of this]: "vow" [here] - "vow," in respect to Naziritism. Just as there, [the criterion is] (6:2): "if he declare" [i.e., if he is capable of serious articulation of a vow (this possibility obtaining, according to the sages, with one who is twelve years and a day)]; here, too, "if he declare" — whence it is derived: Thirteen years and one day — his vows are binding; twelve years and one day — his vows are examined [in respect to the above criterion] (Sifrei). 12

if he vow a vow - What is the intent of [the repetition] "vow"? To teach that epithets of vows are considered [binding just as] vows (Yerushalmi Nedarim 1:1).¹³

if he vow a vow to the L-rd - "if he vow a vow" — It [the forsworn object] does not become forbidden to him unless he vows [to abjure it] against something which can itself be forsworn by a vow, to exclude [his saying: Let this be forbidden to me just as the derivation of benefit

from] a first-born; for this [the first-born] is forbidden [by its very nature, and not by vow]. "to the L-rd" — to include [as a valid vow] one's vowing against a sin-offering and a guilt-offering (Nedarim 13a)."

a vow to the L-rd - These vows are permitted [i.e., not binding]: "This is to me as the flesh of swine ... as idolatry... as carcass and torn meat [treifah] ... as forbidden animals and reptiles, etc." For it is written: "if he vow a vow to the L-rd" — He must vow against a vowed object [and not against one which is forbidden by its very nature (see above)] (Ibid. 14a). 15,16

a vow to the L-rd - This teaches us that vows take effect even towards the nullification of a mitzvah ["to the L-rd"]. How so? If one says: I forbid to myself: making a succah, taking a lulav, wearing tefillin, they are forbidden to him (Ibid. 16b).¹⁷

a vow to the L-rd - This teaches us that one can forbid to himself only something which is "to the L-rd" [i.e., His vow can take effect only if vowed against something which is itself forbidden as having been vowed "to the L-rd," i.e., an offering (see commentary 14)] (Yerushalmi Nedarim 2:1).¹⁸

or swear an oath - What is the intent of [the repetition] "oath"? To teach that epithets of oaths are considered [binding, just as] oaths (*Ibid.* 1:1).19

to bind a bond - It was taught: What is the intent of "bond"? One's saying: I shall not eat flesh and I shall not drink wine, as on the day that his father died, as on the day that his teacher died, as on the day that Gedaliah ben Achikam was killed, as on the day that I saw Jerusalem in ruins (Nedarim 12a). 20,21

to bind a bond - It was taught: [What is the halachah] if he assumed a vow in the terms of an oath, or an oath in the terms of a vow? R. Yossi resolved it from: "to bind a bond" — Whether he said: "It is forbidden to me" [the formula of a vow] or "I am forbidden to it" [the formula of an oath], it is forbidden [i.e., he is bound by any manner of bond ("bound" and "forbidden" being the same [assur] in Hebrew)] (Yerushalmi Nedarim 1:1).²²

to bind a bond - It was taught: I might think that even if he took an oath

to eat carcass and *treifah*, forbidden animals and reptiles, he is subsumed in: "according to all that issues from his mouth shall he do"; it is, therefore, written: "to bind a bond" — to bind what is loose ["loose" and "permitted" being the same (*mutar*) in Hebrew], and not to loose what is bound (*Sifrei*).²³

to bind a bond [le'esor issur], etc. - What is the intent of "le'esor issur"? As in (Jeremiah 40:1): "and he was assur ["bound"] in chains" (Yerushalmi Nedarim 9:1).24

upon his soul. One whose "soul" is his own, to exclude a servant, whose "soul" is not his own [but his master's — so that a master may annul his servant's vow if it undermines his efficiency] (Nazir 62b).²⁵

he shall not break his word - R. Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel: Where is the annulment of vows Scripturally intimated? In: "he shall not break his word." He may not break it, but others may break [i.e., annul] it for him (Chagigah 10a).²⁶

he shall not break his word - If one says: I forbid to myself sleeping, or walking; or if one says to his wife: I forbid to myself [the pleasure of] marital relations with you, he is subsumed in: "He shall not break his word" [though what is forbidden be intangible] (Nedarim 14b).²⁷

he shall not break [yachel] his word - It was taught: Things which are permitted and which others have forbidden to themselves [as a special act of piety] should not be permitted in their [the "forbidders'"] presence, it being written: "he [another] shall not profane [this being a possible reading of yachel] his [the "forbidder's"] word" (Ibid. 15a).²⁸

he shall not break his word - R. Gidel said in the name of Rav: Whence is it derived that one does not swear to transgress mitzvoth [i., e., that an oath to transgress a mitzvah is not valid]? From: "He shall not break his word." He may not break his word [i.e., what concerns him], but a word in opposition to the will of Heaven [i.e., mitzvoth,] is broken (Ibid. 16b).²⁹

he shall not break his word - From here it is derived that a sage does not annul his own vows (*Ibid.* 81b).³⁰

he shall not break [yachel] his word - From here it is derived that a

sage does not annul a vow until it has taken effect ["chal," as in "yachel" (i.e., He does not annul it until the time for its implementation has arrived)] (Ibid. 90a).³¹

he shall not break his word - A Nazirite who violates his Naziritism receives stripes for: "he shall not break his word" (Nazir 38b).³²

he shall not break his word - "Konam" [an epithet for a vow] is subsumed in: "he shall not break his word" (Shevuoth 20b).³³

he shall not break his word - When Ravin came, R. Yochanan said: [If one swears:] "I have eaten" or "I have not eaten" [and the opposite is the case], this constitutes a false oath [but not the breaking of a word]. [If he swears:] "I shall eat" or "I shall not eat" [and does the opposite], he transgresses: "he shall not break his word" (Ibid. 21a).34

he shall not break ["lo yachel"] his word - It was taught: Whence is it derived that four types of vows [minatory, vain, unwitting, and forced], though they are automatically annulled, should not be uttered in anticipation of such annulment? From: "lo yachel his word" — he shall not make his words chullin [profane] (Tosefta Nedarim 4).35

according to all that issues - From here it is derived that "hands" [i.e., signals, incomplete formulas,] of vows are as vows themselves (*Nedarim* 3b).³⁶

according to all that issues - From here it is derived that a vow which is partially annulled [i.e., a particular element of which is subject to annulment] is totally annulled (Yerushalmi Nedarim 1:1).³⁷

that issues from his mouth - It was taught: R. Yishmael says: Whence is it derived that one does not swear to transgress mitzvoth [i.e., that an oath to transgress a mitzvah is not valid]? From: "according to all that issues from his mouth" — and not what issues from the mouth of Heaven (Ibid. 2:2).38

that issues from his mouth - This tells me only of what issued forth from his mouth. Whence do I derive the same for what he vowed or swore in his heart? From: "to bind a bond upon his soul" (Sifrei).³⁹

30:4 And a woman, if she vow a vow to the L-rd, and bind a bond in the house of her father in her youth.

And a woman - A woman is hereby being likened to a man, viz.: Just as a man is subsumed in "He shall not break" and "He shall not delay," so, a woman (*Ibid.*).40

And a woman - I might think [that this applies] even after she has come of age; it is, therefore, written: "in her youth." [In that instance,] I might think even if she were a minor; it is, therefore, written: "a woman." How is this to be reconciled? [Scripture must be speaking of] one who has left her minority and not yet attained her majority [twelve and a half years] — whence it is derived: The vows of a girl of twelve years and a day are binding (*Ibid.*).41

and bind a bond - "binding" connotes an oath, as it is written (11): "or she bind a bond upon her soul with an oath" (*Ibid.*).⁴²

in the house of her father in her youth - [The verse speaks of] one, all of whose youth is spent in her father's house, to exclude a widow or one divorced in marriage [as opposed to betrothal], where all of her youth was not spent in her father's house (Sifrei).⁴³

30:5 If her father hear her vow and her bond wherewith she bound her soul, and her father be silent to her, then all of her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she bound her soul shall stand.

If he hear - to exclude one who is deaf (Ibid.).44

If her father hear - This tells us only of his own hearing [of the vow]. Whence do we derive [that the same halachah applies] if others inform him of it? From: "on the day that he hear" (Ibid.).45

her vow - If she vowed Naziritism and he [the father] thought that she vowed an offering; if she vowed [not to eat] figs, and he thought she vowed grapes, then he must repeat his annulment, it being written: "If her father hear her vow" — he must know her vow exactly [in order for his annulment to be valid] (Nedarim 11:5, See Bartenura). 46,47

and he be silent to her - He must intend her. If his daughter vowed, and he said: I thought my wife vowed, he must repeat his annulment, it being written: "and he be silent to her" — he must intend her, specifically (Sifrei).48

then all of her vows shall stand, etc. - I might think that if she vowed and it stood [unchallenged], and he later annulled it, the annulment would be valid; it is, therefore, written [again]: "shall stand" — if he allowed it to stand a short while, he may no longer annul it (*Ibid.*).⁴⁹

30:6 And if her father constrain her on the day that he hear, then all her vows and her bonds wherewith she bound her soul shall not stand; and the L-rd shall forgive her, for her father constrained her.

for her father constrained - If she vowed, and then said: I know that my father would annul any vow he heard — I might think it would thereby be annulled; it is, therefore, written: "for her father constrained" — If he annulled it, it is annulled; if not, it is not annulled (*Ibid.*).50

for her father constrained her - If his wife vowed, and he thought his daughter vowed; if his daughter vowed, and he thought his wife vowed, he must repeat his annulment, it being written: "constrain her" — her, specifically (Nedarim 86b).^{51,52}

for her father constrained her - If one said to his caretaker: Annul all the vows my daughter makes from now until I return from that place, and he annulled them, I might think they are annulled; it is, therefore, written: "for her father constrained her" — If her father annulled them, they are annulled; if not, they are not annulled (Sifrei).⁵³

30:7 And if be, she shall be, to a man, and her vows be upon her, or the utterance of her lips wherewith she bound her soul,

And if be, she shall be, to a man - Of whom are we speaking? If of a married woman, she is already dealt with (11): "And if in the house of

her husband, she vowed"; if of an unmarried woman, she is already dealt with (4): "And a woman, if she vow a vow to the L-rd." What, then, is the intent of: "And if be, she shall be, to a man"? The verse refers to a betrothed maiden, her father and her husband [together] annulling her vows (Yerushalmi Nedarim 10:1).⁵⁴

And if be, she shall be, to a man, etc. - The father and the husband of a betrothed maiden [together] annul her vows, it being written: "And if be, she shall be, to a man, and her vows be upon her." From here it is derived that the father and the husband of a betrothed maiden [together] annul her vows (Nedarim 67a).⁵⁵

And if be, she shall be to a man, etc. - If her husband [i.e., the one to whom she is betrothed] dies, the option [of annulling her vows] is [again] exclusively her father's, it being written: "And if be, she shall be to a man, and her vows be upon her" — the pre-second "being" [i.e., her status before her possible second betrothal] is likened to her pre-first "being" [i.e., her status before her first betrothal]. Just as in her pre-first "being" her father annulled by himself, so in her pre-second "being" her father annuls by himself (*Ibid.* 70a). 56

and her vows be upon her - If she vowed while betrothed — if she were divorced on the same day and betrothed on the same day — even a hundred times — her father and her latest husband annul her vows. Whence is it derived that the last betrother annuls the vows that appeared to [i.e., were heard by] the first? From: "And if be, she shall be to a man, and her vows be upon her" — the vows that were already upon her. But perhaps this is true only of the vows that did not appear to [i.e., were not heard by] the first betrother! [This is not so, for] "upon her" is a superfluous construction [connoting all the vows that were upon her, even those that were heard by the first betrother] (Ibid. 71a). 57,58

and her vows be upon her - to include those that she had already made in her father's house [before her betrothal] (Yerushalmi Nedarim 10:1).⁵⁹

or the utterance of her lips - Abbaye said: "Mivta" ["utterance"] constitutes an oath, it being written: "or the utterance [mivta] of her lips wherewith she bound her soul." "Swearing" is not [explicitly]

mentioned here. With what, then, did she bind herself? With an oath [which is connoted by "mivta"] (Shevuoth 20a).60

30:8 And her husband hear, on the day that he hear, and he be silent to her, then her vows shall stand; and her bonds wherewith she bound herself shall stand.

And her husband hear - to exclude the wife of one who is deaf (*Nedarim* 73a).⁶¹

30:9 And if on the day that her husband hear, he constrain her and annul the vow which is upon her and the utterance of her lips wherewith she bound her soul, then the L-rd shall forgive her,

on the day that he hear - This teaches us that the annulment of vows obtains the entire [one] day. But is it not written (15): "from day to day"? This is needed. For if it were written [only]: "on the day that he hear," I would think only the day and not the night; it is, therefore, written: "from day to day," i.e., a twenty-four hour period — so that vows are annulled even at night (*Ibid.* 76b).^{62,63}

he constrain her - This teaches us, in respect to the husband, that constraint is equivalent to annulment, and that [his] remaining silent on the day of his hearing [of the vow] is equivalent to [his remaining silent] on the day of the vow itself (Sifrei).⁶⁴

30:10 And the vow of a widow or a divorced woman — everything which she forbids to her soul shall stand with her.

And the vow of a widow or a divorced woman - Why mention this? [i.e., Is it not superfluous?] Has she not left the domain of her father and of her husband? It is needed for an instance in which her father gave her [in marriage] to the representatives of the husband, and she were widowed or divorced on the way, Scripture telling us that once she has

left her father's domain, even for a minimal time, he may no longer annul her vows (Yevamoth 87b).⁶⁵

And the vow of a widow or a divorced woman - How is this to be understood? An unmarried woman who vowed to become a Nazirite after thirty days, though she were married within those thirty days, her husband cannot annul it; a married woman who vowed to become a Nazirite after thirty days, if her husband annulled the vow, though she were widowed or divorced within the thirty days, the vow is annulled (Nedarim 89a).^{66,67}

And the vow of a widow or a divorced woman - It was taught: If a widow or a divorced woman vowed to become a Nazirite when she were married, then, if she married, her husband may not annul that vow. If a married woman vowed to become a Nazirite if divorced (and she were divorced), her husband [before the divorce] may annul the vow, it being written: "And the vow of a widow or a divorced woman — everything that she forbids to her soul shall stand with her" — the "forbidding" [i.e., acceptance] of the vow must obtain while she is widowed or divorced [for it to be binding upon her, though her status at the time the vow takes effect may be different] (*Ibid.*).68

And the vow of a widow or a divorced woman - Widowed or divorced after marriage, or widowed or divorced [even] after betrothal? This can be derived, viz.: A father cannot annul the vows of his daughter once she has come of age [bogereth (twelve and a half years)] and he cannot annul the vows of his widowed daughter. Just as a bogereth is one who has entirely left her father's domain, so, the widowed and divorced woman in question must be one who has left the father's domain [i.e., widowed and divorced after marriage, as opposed to after betrothal, in which instance she is still partially in his domain] (Sifrei).69

30:11 And if in the house of her husband she vowed, or bound her soul with a bond by swearing,

And if in the house of her husband she vowed - This teaches us that the husband does not annul her previous vows (Nedarim 67b).⁷⁰

And if in the house of her husband she vowed - Is this

speaking of a married woman or of a betrothed woman? "And if be, she shall be, to a man" (7) already speaks of a betrothed woman. [This verse, then, must be speaking of a married woman] (Sifrei).⁷¹

And if in the house of her husband she vowed - This tells me only of a [proper] Israelite [marriage]. Whence do I derive [the same halachah] for a widow married to a high-priest or a divorced woman or one who has received chalitzah [release from levirate marriage] who is married to a regular priest? From: "And if in the house of her husband she vowed" — in any event (Ibid.).⁷²

30:13 And if her husband annul them on the day of his hearing, then all the utterance of her lips for her vows and for binding her soul shall not stand; her husband has annulled them and the L-rd will forgive her.

her husband has annulled them - If one says to his wife: Here is your divorce with the exception of the annulment of your vows [i.e., I reserve the right to annul your vows], what is the halachah? Do we say that [it is a valid divorce] because he reserved no tie with her in the marriage itself, or do we say: "her husband has annulled them" [i.e., the reservation of the annulment right itself makes him to a certain extent "her husband," and the divorce is invalid]? The question was not resolved (Gittin 85a).⁷³

and the L-rd will forgive her - The Rabbis taught: The verse speaks of a woman whose vow was annulled by her husband without her knowledge. [Though in her mind she is violating her vow, she will be forgiven because of her husband's annulment]. And when R. Akiva came to this verse, he would cry, saying: Now if one who intended to eat swine and ate lamb [(i.e., in principle, the above instance)] needs atonement and forgiveness, then how much more so, one who intends to eat swine and actually eats it! (Nazir 23a).^{74,75}

30:14 Every vow and every oath of binding to afflict the soul, her husband shall cause it to stand, and her husband shall annul it.

Every vow - "every" — even if she vowed not to taste pepper or gluskin [a type of bread (i.e., as trifling as it may be, he may annul it)] (Yerushalmi Nedarim 11:2).⁷⁶

to afflict the soul - Now does he not also annul vows which do not involve affliction of soul? Did we not learn (17): "between a man and his wife" — This teaches us that a husband annuls vows between himself and her [even those which do not involve affliction]? They answered: Vows of affliction he annuls both for himself and for others [i.e., even if she is divorced or widowed the annulment stands]; vows not involving affliction, he annuls for himself, but not for others (Nedarim 77b).⁷⁷

to afflict the soul - that which will eventually lead to affliction, including bathing, abstention from bathing eventually leading to affliction (*Ibid.* 80b).⁷⁸

her husband shall cause it to stand, etc. - If one said to his caretaker: Annul all the vows that my wife makes from now until I return from that place, and he annulled them, I might think that they are annulled; it is, therefore written: "her husband shall cause it to stand, and her husband shall annul it" (Ibid. 72b).⁷⁹

her husband shall cause it to stand, etc. - If one says to his wife: All the vows that you vow from now until I return from that place are annulled, he has said nothing, it being written: "her husband shall cause it to stand, and her husband shall annul it" — what has reached the stage of "standing" is subject to annulment; what has not reached the stage of "standing" is not subject to annulment (*Ibid. 75a*).80

her husband shall cause it to stand, etc. - If she said: I vow not to taste these figs and grapes, [if he caused it to stand for figs or annulled it for figs, he does not thereby cause it to stand for grapes or annul it for grapes], it being written: "her husband shall cause it to stand, and her husband shall annul it." Just as with annulment, what he annuls is annulled, and what he does not annul is not annulled; so with "standing"; what he allows to stand stands, and what he does not allow to stand does not stand (*Ibid.* 87b).⁸¹

30:15 And if silent will be silent to her, her husband from day to day, then he has caused to stand all her vows; or all her bonds which are upon her, he has caused to stand, for he was silent to her on the day of his hearing.

And if silent - Scripture speaks of silence for the purpose of taunting. But perhaps it is silence for the purpose of confirming [the vow]! [This cannot be, for] "for he was silent to her" already speaks of silence for the purpose of confirming. How, then, am I to understand: "And if silent will be silent to her, her husband"? As silence for the purpose of taunting [which, nonetheless, constitutes confirmation] (Ibid. 79a). 82,83

from day to day - [a twenty-four hour period] This teaches that vows are also annulled at night (*Ibid.* 76b).⁸⁴

30:16 And if he annul them after his hearing, then he shall bear her sin.

after his hearing. What is the intent of "after his hearing"? After his confirmation of the vow. But perhaps it is "after his hearing," literally! [This cannot be, for] "for he was silent to her on the day of his hearing" already speaks of hearing. How, then, am I to understand: "after his hearing"? As after his confirmation of the vow (Sifrei).85

then he shall bear his sin - Scripture hereby teaches us that he takes his place for [punishment of her] sin. Now does this not follow a fortiori viz.: If in respect to G-d's measure of punishment, which [relative to that of reward] is small, one who causes his neighbor to go astray takes his place [for punishment], then, in respect to His measure of good, which is [relatively] large, how much more so [is one rewarded for being instrumental in his neighbor's mitzvah]! (Sifrei).

30:17 These are the statutes which the L-rd commanded Moses, between a man and his wife, between a father and his daughter, in her maidenhood the house of her father.

between a man and his wife - This teaches us that a husband annuls the

vows between himself and her [i.e., those which affect their marital relationship] (*Nedarim* 68a).⁸⁷

between a man and his wife, etc. - It was taught in the school of R. Yishmael: "between a man and his wife, between a father and his daughter" — This teaches us that the husband and the father of a betrothed maiden [together] annul her vows (*Ibid.*).88

between a man and his wife, etc. - "between a man and his wife, between a father and his daughter" — The father is hereby being likened to the husband, and the husband to the father in respect to all of the aforementioned provisions (Sifrei).⁸⁹

between a father and his daughter - "between a man and his wife, between a father and his daughter": Just as a husband annuls only vows of affliction of soul and vows between himself and her [see above], so the father annuls only such vows (Yerushalmi Nedarim 11:1).90

in her maidenhood the house of her father - The father is the beneficiary of his daughter in: her betrothal money, her findings, and her handiwork, it being written: "in her maidenhood the house of her father" — All the gains of her maidenhood belong to her father (Kethuvoth 46b).91

in her maidenhood the house of her father - The father has rights of annulment of his daughter's vows, it being written: "in her maidenhood the house of her father" (*Ibid.* 47a).⁹²

in her maidenhood the house of her father - If her father died [while she was betrothed], annulment rights do not pass exclusively to her husband, it being written: "in her maidenhood the house of her father" [which implies that any "maiden" (from twelve and a day to twelve and a half) even one in the above situation, is tied to a certain extent to her father] (Nedarim 70a).⁹³

31:2 Take the revenge of the children of Israel from the Midianites; afterwards you will be gathered unto your people.

from the Midianites - But were not the Moabites the instigators! They

made peace with Midian in order to war with Israel. And why were they called "Midianites"? Because they strove [mithdaynim (as in "Midian")] with Israel (Sifrei). 1.2

afterwards you will be gathered - R. Yitzchak said: Scriptural embellishments are a halachah to Moses from Sinai, one such embellishment being: "afterwards you will be gathered to your people" (Nedarim 37b).³

afterwards you will be gathered - This is in praise of the leaders of Israel. They do not depart from the world until they take Israel's revenge, which is the revenge of the One who spoke and caused the world to come into being (Sifrei).⁴

31:3 And the L-rd spoke to Moses, saying: hechaltzu from you men for the army; and let them be against Midian to execute the revenge of the L-rd against Midian.

hechaltzu from you - What is the intent of "hechaltzu"? "Draw forth" from the house to the battle (Yevamoth 102b).5

31:6 And Moses sent them a thousand to a tribe to the war: they, and Pinchas the son of Elazar the priest to the war, and the holy articles, and the trumpets of *teruah* in his hand.

they, and Pinchas - "they" — Sanhedrin; "Pinchas" — the priest anointed for war; "the holy articles" — the ark and the tablets contained therein; "and the trumpets of *teruah*" — the shofars (*Sotah* 43a).^{6,7}

they, and Pinchas - This teaches us that they were were equivalent to Pinchas, and Pinchas was over and against all of them (Sifrei).8

31:7 And they warred against Midian as the L-rd commanded Moses, and they killed every male.

And they warred, etc. - They surrounded it on all four sides. R. Nathan

says: They left one of the four sides open so that they could escape (*Ibid.*).9

31:8 And the kings of Midian they killed along with their slain: Evi, Rekem, Tzur, Chur, and Reva, the five kings of Midian; and Bilam the son of Beor, they killed by the sword.

and Bilam - What was Bilam doing there? R. Yochanan said: He had come to claim his reward for the twenty-four thousand Jews that had been killed through his counsel. Rav said: This is as people say: "The camel went to ask for horns, and the ears that he had were cut off" (Sanhedrin 106a).^{10,11}

31:14 And Moses was wroth with the officers of the host; the officers of the thousands and the officers of the hundreds who came from the host of battle.

And Moses was wroth - He said to them: "Have you reverted to your original vice!" [fraternization with the daughters of Midian] They answered (49): "Not a man of us has failed" [in that respect]. Moses: "If so, why do you seek atonement?" [see 50]. They: "Though we escaped the sin itself, we did not escape thoughts of it" (Shabbath 64a). 12-15

with the officers of the host - It is the leaders who bear the stigma (Sifrei).¹⁶

31:17 And now, kill every male among the young; and every woman knowing a man for carnal relations, kill.

knowing a man - Scripture speaks of potential for such relations. But perhaps it is to be understood literally [as having had relations]? [This cannot be, for] "And all the young among the women who did not know carnal relations, keep alive for yourselves" (18) indicates that Scripture is speaking of potential [for, otherwise, it woud be in contradiction with "and every woman knowing a man," [which would

imply that the young were to be kept alive whether or not they had lived with a man] (Yevamoth 60b).¹⁷

31:18 And all the young among the women who did not know carnal relations, keep alive for yourselves.

keep alive for yourselves - for maid-servants (Ibid.).18

31:19 And you, abide outside the camp seven days. Whoever has killed a soul and whoever has touched one slain, shall cleanse himself on the third day and on the seventh day, you and your captives.

and whoever has touched one slain - This teaches us that although gentiles do not cause tent-uncleanliness, they do cause contact and bearing uncleanliness (Yevamoth 61a).¹⁹

you and your captives - Their captives are likened to them. Just as you require sprinkling [of the purifying waters] on the third and seventh days, so do your captives [if they convert] (Yerushalmi Pesachim 8:8).²⁰

31:20 And every garment, and every vessel of skin, and all work of goats, and every vessel of wood shall you cleanse.

And every garment, etc. - It is written here, in respect to dead-body uncleanliness: "garment" and "skin"; and, in respect to creeping-thing uncleanliness (*Leviticus* 11:32): "garment" and "skin." Just as there, only a garment which is spun and woven [acquires uncleanliness]; here, too, only one which is spun and woven (*Shabbath 64a*).²¹

and all work of goats - to include whatever comes from goats, e.g., [vessels made] from horns or from hooves. Whence do I derive [the same halachah] for other beasts and animals? From: "and all work." Why, then, is it written: "goats"? To exclude birds [which would not be excluded if "beasts" or "animals," generically, were written] (Chullin 25b).²²

31:21 And Elazar the priest said to the men of the army who came to the war: This is the statute of the Torah, which the L-rd commanded Moses:

And Elazar said - It was taught: R. Elazar says: All who render a halachic decision in the presence of their teacher are brought down from their greatness, as it is written: "And Elazar the priest said: ... This is the statute of the Torah, which the L-rd commanded Moses." Even though he said: "which the L-rd commanded Moses," he was punished, it being written (27:21); "And before Elazar the priest shall he [Joshua] stand" — yet nowhere do we find Joshua having recourse to him (Eruvin 63a).²³

And Elazar said - Resh Lakish said: All who get angry — if he is wise, his wisdom departs from him, as it is written (14): "And Moses was wroth," and: "And Elazar the priest said: ... This is the statute of the Torah, which the L-rd commanded Moses," from which it is to be inferred that the halachah escaped him (Pesachim 66b).²⁴

31:22 Only the gold and the silver, the copper and the iron, the tin and the lead,

Only the gold - According to the Torah, only metal vessels of "new uncleanliness" [i.e., those unaltered after becoming unclean] require cleansing [with the purifying waters]; but Shimon b. Shetach decreed such cleansing even for those of "old uncleanliness" [i.e., those which had been broken to remove their uncleanliness and refashioned into other vessels]. Why so? As a safeguard for the waters of purification [i.e., Otherwise, so as not to wait seven days as required with the waters of purification, the owner would simply break the unclean vessel and reshape it immediately — and the institution of the purifying waters would be forgotten] (Shabbath 16b).²⁵

Only the gold - Scripture is speaking of [finished] vessels. But perhaps it is speaking of golmim [unfinished, undifferentiated metal forms]? I derive [otherwise, as follows]: The dead of Israel cause uncleanliness, and the slain of Midian cause uncleanliness; just as with the dead of Israel, [finished] vessels produce uncleanliness and not golmim, so, with the slain of Midian (Sifrei).²⁶

Only the gold - From here it is derived that any rust is to be removed [i.e., "Only the gold" is to be passed through the fire, and not what adheres to it] (*Ibid.*).²⁷

31:23 Every thing that comes into the fire shall you pass through the fire and it shall be clean; but in the purifying waters shall it be cleansed. And every thing that does not come into the fire shall you pass through water.

Every thing - ["Every," even the taste alone], whence R. Akiva posited "The taste is equivalent to the substance" as a Scriptural principle (Nazir 37b).²⁸

Every thing [davar] - R. Shmuel b. Nachmani said in the name of R. Yonathan: Whence is it derived that a metal vessel intended for sound production acquires uncleanliness? From: "Every davar that comes into the fire shall you pass through the fire" — even dibbur [similar to davar) "sound"] comes into the fire (Shabbath 58b).²⁹

that comes into the fire - such as: knives, spits, and grills; "And everything that does not come into the fire" — such as pots, stew-pots, kettles, and boilers (Sifrei).30

shall you pass through the fire - R. Chiyya the son of R. Huna said: The Torah forbade only a "one-day" pot [i.e., a pot which had been cooked in on that day], not giving off a defective taste. Why so? [A vessel which] gives off a defective taste is permitted (Avodah Zarah 75b).³¹

and it shall be clean - It was taught: If one takes utensils from gentiles, though he pass them through fire and white-heat them, he must immerse them in forty sa'ah. Whence is this derived? From: "shall you pass through the fire and it shall be clean." Scripture adds an additional cleanliness. And which is that? Immersion (Ibid.).³²

but in the purifying waters shall it be cleansed - Bar Kappara taught: From: "in the purifying waters," I would think that sprinkling [with the waters of the red heifer] was required on the third and seventh days; it is, therefore, written: "but, which "divides" [these waters from the

waters of sprinkling mentioned previously]. What, then, is the intent of "niddah" [heretofore translated as "purifying"]? The waters in which a niddah immerses, i.e., forty sa'ah (Ibid. 75b).³³

in the waters of niddah - Both "and it shall be clean" and "in the waters of niddah" need be written. For if it were written [only]: "and it shall be clean," I might think that any amount [of water suffices]; it is, therefore, written: "in the waters of niddah." And if it were written [only]: "in the waters of niddah," I might think that the setting of the sun were required [following immersion, for the vessel to be clean], as with niddah; it is, therefore, written: "and it shall be clean" — immediately (Ibid.).³⁴

31:24 And you shall wash your garments on the seventh day, and you shall be clean; and afterwards you may come into the camp.

And you shall wash your garments, etc. - It was taught: Whence do we derive that a reed-mat that came in contact with the dead is unclean for seven days? Rava said: From: "And you shall wash your garments on the seventh day": All dead-body uncleanliness is not less than seven days (Bava Kamma 25b).35

31:30 And from half of the children of Israel shall you take one portion from fifty: of the people, of the cattle, of the asses, and of the sheep, of all beasts; and you shall give them to the Levites, who keep the charge of the sanctuary of the L-rd.

one portion from fifty - R. Levi said: It is written: "shall you take one portion from fifty": All that you take from a different place shall correspond to this — whence is derived the one-from-fifty criterion for standard terumah (Yerushalmi Terumoth 4:2).³⁶

31:49 And they said to Moses: Your servants have taken the sum of the men of war that are in our hands, and no man of us has failed.

and no man of us has failed. This teaches us that not even one Jew was killed (Yevamoth 61a).³⁷

31:50 And we would present the offering of the L-rd, every man what he has found, golden vessels, etzadah and tzamid, taba'ath, agil, and chumaz, to atone for our souls before the L-rd.

the offering of the L-rd - "And we would present the offering of the L-rd ... etzadah and tzamid, etc." This teaches us that Temple maintenance consecrations are also called "offerings" (Yoma 63b).³⁸

etzadah, etc, - "etzadah" — a knee-band; "tzamid" — a wrist-band, as in (Genesis 24:22): "and tzemidim on her hands"; "taba'ath" — a ring; "agil" — an ear-ring, as in (Ezekiel 16:12): "and agilim on your ears"; "chumaz" — some say: a pudendal ornament; others, a breast-ornament (Yerushalmi Shabbath 6:4). 39-41

taba'ath, agil, and chumaz - R. Shesheth said: Why does Scripture enumerate outer ornaments with inner ones? [see above] To teach that if one gazes at a woman's little finger, it is as if he would gaze at her pudendum (Shabbath 64b).⁴²

to atone for our souls - It was taught in the school of R. Yishmael: Why did the Jews of that generation require atonement? Because they had feasted their eyes on nakedness (*Ibid.*).⁴³

32:3 Ataroth and Divon and Ya'azer, and Nimrah, and Cheshbon, and Elaleh, and Sevam, and Nevo, and Ve'on.

Ataroth and Divon - R. Huna b. Yehudah said in the name of R. Ammi: Let one always review his [Torah] chapters along with the congregational readings, twice in the text itself and once in the *Targum*— even "Ataroth and Divon" [which would seem to be "expendable"] (Berachoth 8a).

32:21 And there will pass for you, every armed man, the Jordan before the L-rd, until He drive out His foes before Him,

And there will pass for you [ve'avar lachem] - "ve'avar" [here] denotes the future [and not the past], it being written thereafter (22): "And the land shall be subdued before the L-rd, and afterwards you shall return" (Sotah 3a).²

32:22 And the land shall be subdued before the L-rd, and afterwards you shall return, and you shall be clean of the L-rd and of Israel, and the land will be for you as a holding before the L-rd.

and you shall be clean - It was taught: If trustees of charities have no poor to whom to distribute them, they exchange the [copper] coins [which depreciate with time, for silver coins] of others, but not for their own [so that they not be suspected of cheating in the exchange]; and trustees of food charities, if they have no poor to whom to distribute the food, sell it to others, but not to themselves, this, in keeping with: "and you shall be clean of the L-rd and of *Israel*" [by freeing youselves from suspicion] (*Pesachim* 13a).^{3,4}

and you shall be clean - The Rabbis taught: The family of Garmo were expert in the baking of the show-bread, and never was a clean loaf found in the hands of their sons, so that people not say: "They are feeding on the show-bread" — this in fulfillment of: "and you shall be clean of the L-rd and of Israel" (Yoma 38a).

and you shall be clean - The Rabbis taught: The family of Avtinas were expert in the preparation of the incencse, and a perfumed bride never came forth from their houses. And when they would wed a woman from a different place, they would stipulate: "On condition that you not perfume yourself," so that people not say: "They are perfuming themselves with the incense" — this, in fulfillment of: "and you shall be clean of the L-rd and of Israel" (*Ibid.*).6

and you shall be clean - One who enters the Temple treasury to make a donation should wear neither: a folded garment, a shoe, a sandal, tefillin, or an amulet — lest he grow poor and people say: Because of the sin of [stealing from] the treasury [and concealing the theft in the afore-mentioned articles], he has become impoverished; or, lest he grow rich and people say: From the proceeds of the treasury he has become

wealthy. For one must be blameless in the sight of men as he must be in the sight of the L-rd, as it is written: "and you shall be clean of the L-rd and of Israel" (Shekalim 3:2).^{7,8}

and you shall be clean - R. Shmuel b. Nachmani said in the name of R. Yonathan: In the *Pentateuch*, the *Prophets*, and the *Writings* we find that one must be blameless in the sight of men as he must be in the eyes of Israel"; in the *Prophets* (*Joshua* 22:22): "The Mighty One, G-d, the L-rd — He knows; and Israel shall know"; in the *Writings* (*Proverbs* 3:4): "And you shall find grace and goodly understanding in the eyes of G-d and man." Gamliel Zuga asked R. Yossi b. Rebbi: Which is the most explicit? He answered: "and you shall be clean of the L-rd and of Israel (*Yerushalmi Shekalim* 3:2).9

32:30 And if they do not pass over armed with you, then they shall have a holding in your midst in the land of Canaan.

And if they do not pass over armed - R. Meir says: Any condition which is not of the type of that of the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuven [i.e., both the condition and its converse] is not a [valid] condition, as it is written: "And Moses said to them: "If the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuven pass over ... And if they do not pass over ..." (Kiddushin 61a).10

Masei

33:3 And they traveled from Ra'amses on the first month. On the fifteenth day of the first month, on the morrow of the Pesach, the children of Israel went out with a high hand in the sight of all of Egypt.

On the fifteenth day of the first month - It was taught: (Psalms 104:19): "He made the moon for the appointed times; the sun knows its setting" — From the sun's knowing of its setting, He made the moon for the appointed times [i.e., the lunar count for the festivals starts only after sunset, though the first lunar quarter may have begun after midday]. R. Berechiah said: It is written: "And they traveled from Ra'amses on the first month. On the fifteenth day of the first month." When the sun set on the eve of the festival, fourteen sunsets had taken place [from the beginning of the month], whence it is derived that the lunar month is reckoned from the setting of the sun [For it is known through the mesorah that the molad (the beginning of the lunar quarter) of the month of the exodus was after mid-day on a Wednesday; and if the month were reckoned from then, the Thursday of the exodus would be the sixteenth, whereas Scripture explicitly states: "On the fifteenth day of the first month"] (Yerushalmi Rosh Hashanah 2:8).^{1,2}

on the morrow of the Pesach - on the morrow of the slaughtering of the Paschal lamb. And when was that [i.e., the morrow]? The fifteenth [of Nissan] (Yerushalmi Challah 2:1).

on the morrow of the Pesach they went out - But another verse states (*Deuteronomy* 16:1): "The L-rd took you out of Egypt at night"! How is this to be reconciled? We are hereby taught that the redemption began at night (Berachoth 9a).4

33:38 And Aaron the priest went up to Hor, the mountain, by the mouth of the L-rd, and he died there in the fortieth

year of the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt, in the fifth month on the first day of the month.

by the mouth of the L-rd - From here it is derived that the angel of death did not prevail over Aaron the priest, and that worms and maggots did not prevail over him (Bava Bathra 17a).⁵

in the fortieth year, etc. - Here it is written: "in the fortieth year ... in the fifth month [Av]," and, elsewhere (Deuteronomy 1:3): "And it was in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month [Shevat]." In Av it is called "the fortieth year," and in Shevat it is called "the fortieth year," whence we deduce that the year of the exodus begins from Nissan and not from Tishrei [for if the latter were true, Shevat (above) would be in the forty-first year] (Rosh Hashanah 2b).6

in the fortieth year of the exodus - whence it is derived that the years are reckoned according to the exodus (Yerushalmi Rosh Hashanah 1:1).

33:47 And they traveled from Divon Gad, and they encamped in Almon Divlathaimah.

Divlathaimah - It was taught: R. Nechemiah says: A word which requires a lamed prefix is given a heh suffix by Scripture, e.g., "Divlathaim" — "Divlathaimah" (Yevamoth 13b).

33:49 And they camped by the Jordan from Beth Hayeshimoth until Avel Hashittim in the plains of Moav.

From Beth Hayeshimoth - Rabbah b. Bar Chana said: I saw that place, and it was thirteen by thirteen parasangs (Eruvin 55b).9

until Avel Hashittim - How far was that? Twelve mil (Yerushalmi Shevi'ith 6:1).10

33:52 You shall drive out all of the inhabitants of the land before you, and you shall destroy all their paving stones; and all their molten images shall you destroy, and all their sacrificial mounds shall you lay waste.

You shall drive out, etc. - While Israel was yet in the Jordan, Joshua said to them: Know why you are crossing the Jordan — in order to drive out the inhabitants of the land before you, as it is written: "You shall drive out all of the inhabitants of the land before you" (Sotah 34a)."

33:55 And if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land before you, then those that you leave of them shall be as thorns in your eyes and stings in your sides, and they will harass you in the land wherein you dwell.

And if you do not drive out, etc. - R. Levi, when he introduced the section of *Megillath Esther*, would begin with this verse: "And if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land before you, etc." (*Megillah* 11a).¹²

34:12 And the border shall go down to the Jordan, and its limits shall be at the Salt Sea. This shall be for you the land with its borders roundabout.

with its borders roundabout - This teaches us that all of Eretz Yisrael is regarded as having one border [This has halachic implications] (Bechoroth 55a).1

34:15 The two tribes and the half tribe took their inheritance from across the Jordan near Yerecho eastwards, towards the sunrise.

from across the Jordan near Yerecho - The Jordan is likened to Yerecho, viz.: Just as Yerecho is part of Canaan, so is the Jordan (*Ibid.*).²

34:18 And one chief, one chief, for a tribe shall you take to inherit the land.

And one chief - It was taught: R. Gidel said in the name of Rav:

Whence is it derived that *beth-din* appoints a caretaker for orphans coming to divide their father's property? From: "And one chief, one chief, for a tribe shall you take" (*Kiddushin* 42a).³

35:3 And the cities shall be for them to inhabit; and their open spaces shall be for their beasts, and their possessions, and for all of their chayyath.

and for all of their chayyath - What is the intent of "chayah"? If: "an animal", is this not included in "beasts"? If: "living," literally, this is obvious. It must refer, then, to the washing of clothes, which, because of scabious eruptions [(which arise from improper sanitation) is referred to as "living"] (Nedarim 81a).

and for all of their chayyath - R. Avahu said: The cities of refuge were not used for burial, it being written: "and their open spaces shall be for their beasts, and their possessions, and for all of their chayyath" — they were given for living, and not for burial (Makkoth 12a).²

35:4 And the open spaces of the cities that you shall give to the Levites, from the wall of the city and outwards, one thousand cubits roundabout.

from the wall of the city and outwards - R. Meir says: An enclosed space [of seventy cubits] is provided for the city. Whence is this derived? Rava said: From: "from the wall of the city and outwards," Scripture hereby intimating: Provide an "outwards" [i.e., an enclosure, such as the above], and then measure (Eruvin 57a).^{3,4}

35:5 And you shall measure from outside the city on the east side, two thousand cubits, and on the south side, two thousand cubits, and on the west side, two thousand cubits, and on the north side, two thousand cubits; and the city shall be in the midst. This shall be for them the open spaces of the cities.

And you shall measure from outside the city - If one vows not to enter a city, he is permitted to enter its outer boundary [two thousand cubits in circumference]. Whence is this derived? From: "And you shall measure from outside the city," which indicates that the outer bound of the city is not regarded as the city proper (Nedarim 55b).

two thousand cubits - But above (4) it is written "one thousand cubits"! How is this to be reconciled? One thousand as an open space, and an additional thousand for fields and vineyards (Sotah 27b).

This shall be for them - The two thousand cubits of the *tchum Shabbath* [the Sabbath limits] are *square*, as in a square tablet, so that there be a gain [of distance] at the corners; as R. Chanina taught: "This shall be for them the open spaces of the cities" — according to this [i.e., these specifications] shall be all the Sabbath restings (*Eruvin* 51a).^{7,8}

35:6 And the cities which you shall give to the Levites: the six cities of refuge, which you shall give, for the murderer to flee there; and, in addition to them, you shall give forty-two cities.

and, in addition to them you shall give, etc. - What is the difference between the six cities of refuge and the forty-two other cities? The first provide refuge whether or not he knows [that they are cities of refuge]; the others — if he knows, they provide refuge; if not, they do not. In the first, the Levites are paid no [lodging] fee; in the second, they are (Makkoth 10a, 13a).9,10

35:11 And you shall call out for yourselves cities. Cities of refuge shall there be for you. And there shall flee there a murderer, the killer of a soul unwittingly.

And you shall call out for yourselves cities - This "calling out" is "designation." "cities" — I might think even large cities; it is, therefore, written "arim" [which connotes small cities]. If so, I might think even villages; it is, therefore, written "arim." How was this implemented in effect? They were of such size as to have markets and a food store (Sifrei). 11,12

And there shall flee there a murderer - The Rabbis taught: Whence is it derived that if one leaves beth-din convicted, and one says: "I have something to say in His defense," he is returned? From (Exodus 23:7): "One who is clean, you shall not kill." And whence is it derived that if one leaves beth-din acquitted, and one says: "I have something to say to incriminate Him," he is not returned? From (Ibid.): "A righteous [i.e., acquitted] one you shall not kill." Whence do we derive [the same policy] for those who are sentenced to exile? It is derived: "murderer" [here (unwittingly)] - "Murderer" [wilfully] (Sanhedrin 32b).13

the killer of a soul - to exclude one who unwittingly wounds his father. I might think that since, if he did so wittingly, he incurs the death penalty, then, if he does so unwittingly, he should be exiled; it is, therefore, written otherwise (Makkoth 8b).¹⁴

unwittingly - to exclude one who assumes that it is permitted [to kill], in which instance, he is not exiled (*Ibid.* 7b).¹⁵

35:12 And the cities shall be for you as a refuge from the avenger; and the murderer shall not die until he stand before the congregation for judgment.

until he stand, etc. - What is the intent of this? Because it is written (27): "And if the avenger kill the murderer [outside the city of refuge], he has no blood" [on his hands], I might think [that he may kill him] even immediately; it is, therefore, written: "until he stand before the congregation for judgment" [and is pronounced an exile] (*Ibid.* 12a).¹⁶

until he stand, etc. - It was taught: R. Akiva says: Whence is it derived that a Sanhedrin which witnesses a killing may not have the murderer executed, but must have him stand trial in a different beth-din? From: "until he stand before the congregation for judgment" — until he stands before a different beth-din (Ibid.).¹⁷

35:13 And the cities which you shall provide — six cities of refuge shall there be for you.

six cities of refuge - Whither is one exiled to the cities of refuge? To the

three across the Jordan and the three in the land of Canaan, as it is written (14): "The three cities shall you provide across the Jordan; and the three cities shall you provide in the land of Canaan." And as long as the three in Eretz Yisrael had not been designated, the three across the Jordan did not grant refuge, it being written: "six cities of refuge shall there be" — they must all be capable of granting refuge as one (*Ibid*. 9b).¹⁸

cities of refuge shall there be - This tells me that they provide refuge only for [inhabitants of] the land. Whence do I derive that they do so also for [those] outside the land? From: "shall there be" [in any event] (Sifrei).19

shall there be - What is the intent of "shall there be"? It shall not be ruled a condemned town [by cause of idol worship, and so, subject to destruction ("shall there be" implying that it shall continue to be)] (Sifrei Zuta).²⁰

35:15 For the children of Israel and the sojourner and the dweller in their midst shall these six cities be for refuge, to flee there all who kill a soul unwittingly.

and the sojourner and the dweller - But above (12) it is written: "And the cities shall be for you as a refuge" — for you, and not for sojourners. How is this to be understood? Here, [refuge is not provided] in the instance of a sojourning convert who killed a Jew, [it being assumed that he killed him in hatred]; here, [refuge is provided] in the instance of one sojourning convert who killed another (Makkoth 9a).²¹

35:16 And if with an iron implement he kill him, he is a murderer — die shall die the murderer.

And if with an iron implement - It was taught: Rebbi says: It is revealed and known before Him who spoke and caused the world to come into being that any amount of iron can kill; for this reason the Torah did not indicate a specific quantity (Sanhedrin 76b).²²

die shall die - Whence is derived the Rabbinic dictum: "Rule by the

majority"? R. Cahana said: From the instance of murder, the Torah ruling that the murderer is to be executed. But perhaps he [the victim] was a treifah [one with a fatal organic defect (in which instance he has not been "murdered")]! It must be, then, [since the killer is, nevertheless, executed] that we rule by the majority [i.e., the majority of men not being "treifah"] (Chullin 11b).^{23,24}

die shall die the murderer - I might think, since it is written: "If with an iron implement he killed him," that he is not liable unless he struck him with iron. Whence would I know that he is likewise liable if he killed him by pelting him with metal balls or clods? It is, therefore, written: "he is a murderer — die shall die the murderer" — in any event (Sifrei).²⁵

35:17 And if with a hand-stone, whereby he can die, he strike him, and he die; he is a murderer — die shall die the murderer.

whereby he can die - This teaches us that he is not liable unless he kills him with something which is potentially lethal. And elsewhere it is written (*Deuteronomy* 19:11): "and he strike him mortally." This teaches us that he is not liable unless he strike him on a part of his body, injury to which may result in his death (*Ibid.*).²⁶

die shall die the murderer - I might think, since it is written: "And if with a hand-stone," that he is not liable unless he struck him with a stone. Whence would I know that he is likewise liable if he killed him by rolling rocks or pillars over him? It is, therefore, written: "he is a murderer — die shall die the murderer" — in any event (*Ibid.*).²⁷

35:18 Or if with a wooden hand-implement, whereby he can die, he strike him, and he die, he is a murderer — die shall die the murderer.

Or if with a wooden hand-implement - It is written: "iron," "stone," and "wood." Stone is not like wood; wood is not like stone; and both are not like iron. What is common to all three is that they are used as weapons by the murderer and effect the death of the victim — to

exclude pushing one into a fire or into water or inciting a dog or a snake against him, in which instance his judgment is relegated to "Heaven" (*Ibid.*).²⁸

die shall die the murderer - I might think, since it is written: "Or if with a wooden implement," that he is not liable unless he struck him with wood. Whence would I derive that he is likewise liable if he killed him by throwing beams or poles at him? It is, therefore, written: "he is a murderer — die shall die the murderer" — in any event (*Ibid.*).²⁹

35:19 The avenger, he shall kill the murderer; when he comes upon him, he shall kill him.

The avenger, etc. - R. Shila taught: "The avenger, he shall kill the murderer" — If one killed his son, his second son does not become an avenger to kill his father; but if one killed his brother, the second brother does become an avenger (Yerushalmi Makkoth 2:5).30

when he comes upon him - It was taught: "The avenger, he shall kill the murderer" — the mitzvah is the avenger's. And whence is it derived that if he has no avenger, beth-din designates one for him? From: "when he comes upon him" — in any event (Sanhedrin 45b).³¹

when he comes upon him, etc. - It was taught: Whence is it derived that even if he [the avenger] said that he could not [kill him immediately, it is a mitzvah for him] to seek him out [and kill him]? From: "when he comes upon him, he shall kill him" — in any event (Yerushalmi Makkoth 2:5).³²

35:20 And if in hatred he thrust him or hurl aught at him in prey,

And if in hatred he thrust him - This tells me only of his killing him with an iron implement, a stone, or a wooden implement. Whence do I derive that if he pushed him off the top of a roof and he fell and died, he is likewise liable? From: "And if in hatred he thrust him" — in any event (Sifrei).³³

hurl aught at him in prey - "in prey" — "hunting" him with intent to kill (*Ibid.*).³⁴

35:21 Or if in hatred he strike him with his hand, and he die, then die shall die the smiter; he is a murderer. The avenger shall kill the murderer when he comes upon him.

Or if in hatred - If he confined him in water or fire so that he could not emerge from it, and he died, he is liable, it being written: "Or if in hatred" — to include one who confines [another in such a manner] (Sanhedrin 76b).³⁵

he strike him with his hand - What is the intent of: "with his hand"? Because it is written: "And if with an iron implement he kill him ... And if with a hand-stone ... or if with a wooden hand-implement," I might think he is liable only if he killed him with these. Whence would I derive [that he is likewise liable] if he crushed, or strangled, or kicked, or trampled him? From: "with his hand" — in any manner (Sifrei).36

he strike him with his hand, and he die - From here we infer that wherever "striking" alone is written, death is not implied (Sanhedrin 84b).³⁷

die shall die the smiter - It was taught: Whence is it derived that if he cannot be killed in the prescribed manner, he may be killed in any manner? From: "die shall die the smiter" — in any manner (*Ibid*. 45b).³⁸

he is a murderer - What is the intent of this? To teach that it is for his killing that he is killed, and not for his ox's (*Ibid.* 15b).³⁹

The avenger shall kill - What is the intent of this? Is it not already written (19): "The avenger, he shall kill the murderer"? But I might think that only one who had an avenger [i.e., a blood-kin] could be avenged. Whence would I derive [the same halachah] for one who did not have an avenger? It is, therefore, written: "The avenger" — in any event (Sifrei).40

35:22 And if of a sudden, without hatred, he strike him, or he cast upon him some instrument, but not in prey,

of a sudden, without hatred - The Rabbis taught: "And if of a sudden" — to exclude [from the laws of exile] one rounding a corner [and inadvertently killing another in doing so]; "without hatred" — to exclude [from the laws of exile one who kills] a foe ["inadvertently"] (Makkoth 7b).41,42

of a sudden, without hatred - From here it may be inferred that "of a sudden" [feta] connotes inadvertency (Krituth 9a).⁴³

he thrust him, or he cast upon him - "he thrust him" — with his body; "or he cast upon him" — to include coming down [with an axe, for example] for the purpose of coming up [and killing someone in the downstroke] (Makkoth 7b).⁴⁴

but not in prey - to exclude [from the laws of exile], one intending [to cast an object] in one direction, and its going in a different direction [and killing someone, such an act not being entirely inadvertent] (*Ibid.*).⁴⁵

35:23 Or with with any stone, whereby one can die, without seeing him — and he cause it to fall upon him and he die, and he not be his foe, and not intend his evil,

without seeing - to exclude from exile one who is blind (Ibid. 9b).46

without seeing - to include [in the laws of exile] one who kills at night ["without seeing" connoting a circumstantial (as opposed to an organic) state] (Yerushalmi Makkoth 2:5).⁴⁷

and he cause it to fall upon him - in the direction of falling [i.e., Exile obtains only if the action that killed were intended to be a downward one, there being a greater possibility of mishap here because of the element of gravity] (Makkoth 7b).⁴⁸

and he not be his foe - The Rabbis taught: "and he not be his foe, and not intend his evil." One [phrase, homiletically,] excludes from sitting in judgment a judge [who has a certain "slant" towards the defendant]

and, the other, two Torah scholars who hate each other [and who, if they judged together, might not be able to do so dispassionately] (Sanhedrin 29a).⁴⁹

35:24 And the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the avenger on these judgments.

And the congregation shall judge, etc. - It was taught in the school of R. Yishmael: "And the congregation shall judge... and the congregation shall rescue" — The congregation [i.e., the beth-din] should include no relatives of the slayer or of the slain (Yerushalmi Sanhedrin 3:9).⁵⁰

on these judgments - It was taught: R. Yehudah said: One who is blind is exempt from all the laws of the Torah, it being written: "And the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the avenger on these judgments" — All who are included in the laws of killer and avenger are included in the judgments [in general]; and all who are not included in these laws [such as the blind] are not included in the judgments (Bava Kamma 87a).⁵¹

35:25 And the congregation shall rescue the murderer from the hand of the avenger, and the congregation shall return him to the city of his refuge to which he had fled; and he shall dwell there until the death of the high-priest, who was anointed with the holy oil.

And the congregation shall rescue - It was taught: R. Akiva says: If the Sanhedrin saw someone kill, they all become witnesses; and a witness may not officiate as a judge. For it is written: "And the congregation shall judge ... and the congregation shall rescue." And once they have seen him kill they can no longer judge him in a favorable light (Rosh Hashanah 26a). 52

And the congregation shall rescue, etc. - Initially, both those who kill unwittingly and those who kill wilfully proceed to the cities of refuge, and beth-din sends and brings them from there. One who incurs the death penalty is killed, and one who does not, is acquitted, as it is written: "And the congregation shall rescue the murderer from the hand

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of the avenger." And one who incurs the penalty of exile is returned to his place, as it is written: "and the congregation shall return him to the city of his refuge" (Makkoth 9b, 10b).53,54

to which he had fled - One who is exiled does not leave his place; neither for testimony of mitzvah, nor for testimony in a monetary litigation, nor for testimony in a capital case — even if all of Israel need him; even if he is needed by such a commander as Yoav the son of Tzeruyah, it being written: "to which he had fled" - [lit., "that he had fled there"] — there shall be his dwelling; there shall he die; there shall he be buried (Ibid. 11b).55

until the death - It was taught: One who killed another unwittingly had no atonement until the Torah provided it for him, viz.: "and he shall dwell there until the death of the high-priest" [that being his atonement] (Yerushalmi Yoma 7:3).56

the high-priest - And it is written (28): "For in the city of his refuge shall he dwell until the death of the high-priest; and after the death of the high-priest the slayer shall return to the land of his holding." We are hereby taught that both the priest anointed with the anointing oil, and the priest of the "manifold vestments," and the priest whose anointment was rescinded "return" the murderer with their death (Ibid. 11a).⁵⁷

who was anointed - If the high-priest died before his judgment were completed, and another appointed in the interim, after which his judgment was completed, he "returns" with the death of the second, it being written: "and he shall dwell there until the death of the highpriest, [lit.:] whom he had anointed." Now did he anoint him! The allusion, then, must be to the one who was anointed in his days (Ibid. b).58

35:26 And if the murderer leave shall leave the border of the city of his refuge whither he had fled.

And if leave shall leave - What is the intent of this? To teach that if he leaves wilfully, he may be killed [by the avenger]; and if unwittingly, he is [re-] exiled (*Ibid.* 12a).59

35:27 And the avenger find him outside the border of the city of his refuge, then the avenger may slay the murderer; he has no blood [on his hands].

then the avenger may slay - It was taught: R. Akiva says: "then the avenger may slay the murderer" — The avenger may do so [ab initio], and others [though not permitted to do so] are not liable [if they do] (Ibid.).⁶⁰

35:28 For in the city of his refuge shall he dwell until the death of the high-priest; and after the death of the high-priest, the slayer shall return to the land of his holding.

For in the city of his refuge shall he dwell - It was taught: A murderer who killed in that city [of refuge] is exiled from one neighborhood to another [within it]. R. Acha b. R. Ikka said: Whence is this derived? From: "For in the city of his refuge shall he dwell" — [the connotation being] the city which had already granted him refuge (*Ibid.* b).⁶¹

to the land of his holding - It was taught: If he died before the highpriest did, his bones are interred in the graves of his fathers, it being written: "the slayer shall return to the land of his holding." What constitutes dwelling in "the land of his holding"? Burial (*Ibid.* 11b).⁶²

to the land of his holding - to the land of his holding, but not to his [previous high] position (Sifrei).63

35:29 And these shall be for you as a statute of judgment throughout your generations in all of your dwellings.

throughout your generations - This teaches us that the institution will obtain throughout the generations (*Ibid.*).⁶⁴

in all of your dwellings - This teaches us that the authority of the sanhedrin obtains both in the land and outside of it (Makkoth 7a).65

35:30 All who kill a soul, by witnesses shall the slayer be killed; and one witness shall not testify in a soul to kill him.

All who kill a soul - I might think [that this is so] even if he causes a miscarriage or if he kills an eight-month birth [which cannot survive]; it is, therefore, written (Exodus 21:12): "One who smites a man" (Sanhedrin 84b).66

the slayer shall be killed - I might think that if he killed by the sword, he is to be killed by the sword; by the rod, that he is to be killed by the rod. [In negation of this] it is written here (*Exodus* 21:20): "revenge," and, elsewhere (*Leviticus* 26:25): "the avenging sword." Just as there, the sword; here, too, the sword (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 7:3).^{67,68}

and one witness shall not testify - He shall testify neither for acquittal nor for conviction (Sanhedrin 33b).⁶⁹

shall not testify in a soul - It was taught: If one of the witnesses said: I can testify in his behalf, he is not heeded, it being written: "and one witness shall not testify in a soul" (*Ibid.* 34a).⁷⁰

shall not testify in a soul to kill him - It was taught: Whence is it derived that if one of the disciples says: I have something to say in incrimination, he is not heeded? From: "one shall not testify against a soul to kill him" (*Ibid.*).⁷¹

35:31 And you shall not take ransom for the soul of a murderer, who is condemned to die; but die, he shall die.

And you shall not take ransom - What is the intent of this? Do not take money from him to acquit him (Ketuvoth 37b).⁷²

for the soul of a murderer - "for the soul of a murderer" you do not take ransom, but you do take ransom for organ prominences which do not grow back [i.e., their monetary value is assessed] (Bava Kamma 83b).⁷³

condemned to die - Therefore, if one is taken out to be executed at the completion of his judgment and others wound or kill him, they are not liable [in that he is considered technically "dead"] (Sifrei).⁷⁴

35:32 And you shall not take ransom to flee to the city of his

refuge to dwell in the land until the death of the priest.

And you shall not take ransom to flee - Do not take money from him to exempt him from exile (Ketuvoth 37b).⁷⁵

to return - It was taught: Whence is it derived that a nirtza [one whose ear was bored, marking him as a servant for life (i.e., until the Jubilee year)], whose master implored him [against his protestations to remain] to leave [at the Jubilee year], and who struck and wounded him — Whence is it derived that the master is not liable [to pay for the injury]? From: "And you shall not take ransom ... to return" — Do not take money [from the master] for one who would return [to servitude] (Bava Kamma 28a)."

to dwell in the land - Abbaye said: We learned: If one's judgment [for exile] were concluded, and he died, his remains are taken there, it being written: "to return to dwell in the land." What kind of dwelling is "in the land"? Burial (Makkoth 11b)."

35:33 And do not pollute the land in which you are; for the blood will pollute the land, and the land will not have atonement for the blood that was spilled in it except by the blood of its spiller.

pollute the land - It was taught: Because of the sin of the spilling of blood the rains are withheld, it being written: "for the blood will pollute [yachnif] the land." The blood will "repose wrath" ["yichan af" (intimated by "yachnif")] on the land [in the form of withheld rains] (Yerushalmi Ta'anith 3:3).78

except by the blood of its spiller - Whence is it derived that if the neck of the calf were broken and the killer thereafter found [See *Deuteronomy* 21] he is not acquitted? From: "and the land will not have atonement for the blood that was spilled in it except by the blood of its spiller" (Sotah 47b)."

except, etc. - It was taught (*Leviticus* 16:30): "Of all of your sins before the L-rd you will be cleansed" — A sin which is known only to the L-rd is atoned for by Yom Kippur. But in that case, a calf whose neck was to

be broken [see above], "over which" Yom Kippur passed — let its neck not be broken, this being a sin known only to the L-rd [i.e., Only the L-rd knows the identity of the murderer]. Rava answered: It is written: "and the land will not have atonement for the blood that was spilled in it except by the blood of its spiller" (Krituth 26a).80-81

36:4 And if the Jubilee year comes for the children of Israel, then their inheritance shall be added to the inheritance of the tribe to which they are wed, and from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers shall their inheritance be taken.

And if the Jubilee year comes - This teaches us that even when the institution of the Jubilee obtains and the inheritances revert [to their original owners], a Torah inheritance [i.e., one mandated by the Torah, as in the instance of the daughters of Tzelafchad,] does not revert (Yerushalmi Ketuvoth 9:1).

And if the Jubilee year shall be - From here R. Yehudah derived that the Jubilee year is destined to cease and to return (*Torath Cohanim*, *Vayikra* 2:14).²

36:6 This is the thing that the L-rd commanded respecting the daughters of Tzelafchad, saying: To whom it is pleasing in their eyes shall they be as wives; but to the family of the tribe of their father shall they be as wives.

This is the thing - It was taught: R. Shimon b. Gamliel said: On the fifteenth day of Av the tribes were permitted to intermarry. Whence is this derived? From: "This is the thing." This thing [i.e., the interdiction of intermarriage amongst the tribes] shall obtain only in this generation (Ta'anith 30b).^{3,4}

This is the thing - It was taught: There is that which obtains with the fathers [i.e., the first generation] which does not obtain with the sons [the succeeding generations]. Of the fathers it is written (8): "And every daughter who receives an inheritance" [the verse going on to interdict her marriage with a member of a different tribe]. This [interdiction]

applied to the fathers, but not to the sons. Whence is this derived? Rava said: From: "This is the thing." This thing shall obtain only in this generation (Bava Bathra 120a).5.6

To whom it is pleasing in their eyes - R. Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel: The daughters of Tzelafchad were permitted to marry into all of the tribes, as it is written: "To whom it is pleasing in their eyes shall they be as wives." How, then, are we to understand: "but to the family of the tribe of their father shall they be as wives"? They were given goodly counsel, to marry only those who were well suited to them [i.e., members of their own tribe] (*Ibid.*).

36:7 And an inheritance of the children of Israel shall not go around from tribe to tribe; but every man in the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers shall the children of Israel cleave.

And an inheritance shall not go around - It was taught: Is the verse referring to the agency of the son [i.e., the mother marrying into a different tribe and the son inheriting her property upon the death of his parents] or the agency of the husband [i.e., the woman intermarrying and her husband inheriting her upon her death]? "And an inheritance shall not go around from one tribe to a different tribe" (9) already speaks of the agency of the husband; this verse must be speaking, then, of the agency of the son (Ibid. 112a).

And an inheritance shall not go around - It was taught: "And [by the interdiction of tribal intermarriage] an inheritance of the children of Israel shall not go around from tribe to tribe" and: "And every daughter who receives an inheritance" [which indicates that daughters can inherit] were stated in one pronouncement [so that the one is a qualification of the other; for otherwise a daughter's inheriting would result in the inheritance going round from tribe to tribe (i.e., the tribe into which she would marry)] (Yerushalmi Nedarim 3:2).9

36:8 And every daughter who receives an inheritance from the tribes of the children of Israel, to one of the family of the

tribe of her father shall she be as a wife, so that the children of Israel shall inherit, each, the inheritance of his fathers.

And every daughter who receives an inheritance, etc. - The Rabbis taught: "And every daughter who receives an inheritance from the *tribes* of the children of Israel": How can a daughter inherit two tribes? She can, in an instance where her father is from one tribe and her mother from a different one, the daughter [in the absence of male heirs] inheriting both upon their death. From here it is derived that a daughter inherits her mother — a fortiori, a son (Bava Bathra 111a). 10,11

And every daughter who receives, etc. - It was taught: R. Yishmael says: A husband inherits his wife, it being written: "And every daughter who receives an inheritance from the tribes of the children of Israel." The verse here speaks of the agency of the husband [See commentary (8)]; for it is written (7): "And the inheritance of the children of Israel shall not go around from tribe to tribe" and (9): "And an inheritance shall not go around from one tribe to a different tribe" (*Ibid.* b). 12,13

And every daughter who receives, etc. - It was taught: A woman causes her children to inherit, but she does not inherit [her children], it being written: "And every daughter who receives" — She receives, but does not cause [her mother] to receive [upon her death] (*Ibid.* 115a).¹⁴

from the tribes - It was taught: Whence is it derived that the son takes precedence to the daughter in the inheritance of the mother? From: "from the tribes." The tribe of the mother is hereby being likened to the tribe of the father, viz.: Just as with the inheritance of the father, the son takes precedence; so, with the inheritance of the mother (*Ibid.* 111a).¹⁵

36:9 And an inheritance shall not go around from one tribe to a different tribe, but each to his inheritance shall cleave, the tribes of the children of Israel.

And an inheritance shall not go around - The verse here speaks of the agency of the husband [See commentary (8)]. But perhaps it speaks of the agency of the son! [This is not so, for] it is written: "to a different tribe," and a son is not "different" (Ibid. 113a). 16

36:11 And Machlah, Tirtzah, Chaglah, Milkah, and Noah, the daughters of Tzelafchad, were to the sons of their uncles as wives.

And they were - It was taught: The daughters of Tzelafchad were equal [in greatness], it being written: "And they were" — one being [of greatness] for all (*Ibid.* 120a).¹⁷

to the sons of their uncles - It was taught: The daughters of Tzelafchad were pious women, marrying only those who were befitting them [as it is written: "And the daughters of Tzelafchad were to the sons of their uncles as wives"] (*Ibid.* 119b).¹⁸

36:13 These are the mitzvoth and the judgments which the L-rd commanded through Moses to the children of Israel in the plains of Moav by the Jordan near Yerecho.

These are the mitzvoth - See commentary on Leviticus 27:34